

## ABSTRACT

**MOBILIZING HABESHA IMMIGRANT CHURCHES IN GREATER BOSTON:  
TRAINING SERVANT LEADERS FOR TRANSFORMATION AND GROWTH**

by

Muluaem Kaba

The Habesha population in Greater Boston, Massachusetts and New England has been growing, but, disappointingly and contrary to expectations, Habesha churches have not kept pace. This study sought to understand hindrances to Habesha church growth and multiplication as well as to develop remedial recommendations for training and equipping church leaders who can foster transformation in the churches and help mobilize them for more effective outreach and disciple-making.

The research centered on six Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant churches in Greater Boston as well as an Ethiopian and Eritrean evangelical fellowship in Portland, Maine. Interviews of Ethiopian and Eritrean leaders in other regions, especially in the Washington, D.C. area and in North Carolina, also contributed to the research conclusions. The study utilized questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups.

The findings related to the need for discipleship training in the churches, training for Christian witness, developing servant leaders, fostering greater unity among regional Habesha churches, and improving communication and transparency between leaders and church members. The study included recommendations for translating the research for use in local and area-wide church training.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled

**MOBILIZING HABESHA CHURCHES IN GREATER BOSTON:  
TRAINING SERVANT LEADERS FOR TRANSFORMATION AND GROWTH**

presented by

Mulualem Kaba

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Dissertation Coach

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Date

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Director, Doctor of Ministry Program

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Date

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Dean of the Beeson Center

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Date

**MOBILIZING HABESHA IMMIGRANT CHURCHES IN GREATER BOSTON:  
TRAINING SERVANT LEADERS FOR TRANSFORMATION AND GROWTH**

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by

Mulualem Kaba

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Mulualem Kaba

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Overview of the Chapter**

This chapter addresses some key issues on why this research is necessary for studying the Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants' local churches outreach and leadership ministry in the greater Boston area. It lists definitions of key terms and some delimitations in the study. The researcher presents the statement of the problem and the purpose for the project, followed by research questions that guide the overall research and rationale for this project.

The description of the research includes assumptions, which will be discussed in the chapter. The definitions of some key words and terminologies used in this project will be used to guide the flow of research. The chapter concludes with a summary of the research setting and a discussion of the intention of the project.

### **Personal Introduction**

I have served as church planter/pioneer evangelist and a local pastor in different parts of western Ethiopia for about fifteen years. I also served eight years as a regional coordinator or superintendent of seventy-five local churches as well as serving five years as a national coordinator for over 220 local churches. As a church coordinator, my major role was to conduct mass evangelism events while keeping unity among local the churches and encouraging and training church leaders and lay persons for ministry.

Here in US, I travelled to several states from 2011 to 2015 to serve in Ethiopian immigrant churches in which they spoke both dominant languages of the homeland, Amharic and Oromo. Wherever I served, I used the opportunities to discuss their evangelistic (mission) activities and the progress of their church growth. After our

discussions, it became apparent a majority of the leaders are lacking enthusiasm and have no clear vision to spread the gospel since much is expected from their geographical or contextual situation. Aubrey Malphurs stated, “The mission is used for planning where the church is going; the vision is used for communicating where the church is going” (132). A vision is important to convey a righteous impact on this dark world. Most of the church leaders lack a church multiplying vision and a mindset for the Kingdom of God that can empower and make them passionate in Kingdom work. An immature spiritual life among various leaders and ministers blocks the growth and the expansion of the church.

Based on my many years of experience, planting new churches is the highest strategy or method of evangelism. Ed Stetzer says, “Multiplication requires not planting one church, but planting churches that plant churches that plant churches” (2). Church planting and multiplications are unstoppable, preserving the life expectancy of the church until the termination of this world.

The Lord gave me a great vision to serve the Kingdom of God by motivating, inspiring, and equipping church ministers, pastors, and lay leaders concerning evangelism (mission) by propagation of the churches, i.e. planting new churches. Craig Ott and Gene Wilson supposed that, “The most remarkable church planting movements are launched and led by apostolic church planters who see themselves more as equippers of church planters than as pastors” (106). Church planters should reproduce themselves.

Developing, as well as empowering, local church leaders will achieve the greatest movement potential. These leaders themselves need to be motivated and local believers need to evangelize, disciple, and plant churches in the power of the Holy Spirit. This type

of ministry is what I am doing. In the meantime, this vision burns, grows and develops in my heart. The prophet Jeremiah expressed such type of flaming vision as follows, "...his word is in my heart like a fire shut up in my bones" (Jer.20:9 NIV). I perceived this vision as the continuation of the work of the Holy Spirit in my journey of ministering and serving in the house of God for several years.

The main reason for this research project occurred while I was attending Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, MA. Those three years afforded me the opportunity to serve in one of the Ethiopian evangelical churches in Boston. In September 2011, one of my friends encouraged me to join this church and suggested I serve in this church as a part time minister. At the time of this dissertation, the church is more than 28 years old. "The church was founded by one immigrant called Dr. Aschalew Kebede" (Bianca Duemling 12). Nevertheless, no sign of proportional and/or balanced growth corresponds to the number of immigrant populations in Boston during that 28-year period. When I left this church (May 2014), the membership did not exceed 150 people in the midst of numerous unreached immigrants saturating the area.

Initially, with the heart of love and sensitivity to serve God's kingdom, I was overwhelmed with a burden to minister and help this church. With this passion and desire to work with them, I shared my vision humbly with the church leaders. In the beginning, they accepted me in love and opened their doors for me to serve, mostly during Sunday sermons as a guest speaker. After a year, the leaders longer wanted to accept my assistance nor to install me for pastoring ministry. They never gave me a reason for that decision. The question remains, "why did the church leaders blindly reject my request to be installed as their pastor? At that time, the church had no pastor. What was the problem

behind their rejection? Did they lack a heart for missions, or a passion for the Kingdom of God?". This research project arose out of these and similar questions. Their refusal of my services was the will of God, especially regarding the principles and vision of church planting and multiplication. Therefore, I responded with gratefulness to their decision without any complaint, and we held a time of discussion to preserve our brotherly fellowship in Christ as coworkers in God's kingdom. Finally, we separated by blessing each other and our future ministries for the Kingdom of God.

Afterward, during a time of fasting and prayer, the Lord provided clear guidance and vision for the harvest. George Cladis said, "Vision seeking is an absolutely essential beginning place" (64). Consequently, God gave me a new vision. He guided me to plant a new church in a different direction from Boston, Massachusetts, where proportionally many Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants are living. Most of these people in this city and surrounding area need to be reached. Since mission and church planting is God's major agenda, He provides all resources including guidance and supportive visionary persons. As Kennon Callahan said, "God help us discover persons with similar longings and strengths" (5). Then God gave me some fellow Christians who have a strong desire to establish a new church. Therefore, this challenge and other additional positive factors from what had already transpired in my heart inspired me to work on developing local church leaders.

My heart had been burdened to work on equipping local church leaders for the extension of the gospel of Jesus Christ and church planting. These ministry experiences from the past pressed me to work on this project for inspiring and developing spiritual,



transformational, and visionary leaders for the renovation of immigrant churches and new church multiplications.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Boston Ethiopians immigrants' community office report says, "starting from 1974, due to a change of the government in the homeland, the massive immigration of Ethiopians to the USA, especially to the New England area, was increased exponentially" (Benyam). These immigrants kept their heritage, religion, and all their traditional and cultural identity while they passed through the diaspora process. Religion plays a significant role in the life of the Ethiopian immigrants. Many Ethiopians are traditionally spiritual and are followers of Abrahamic religions, predominantly Coptic Orthodox Christianity. Thomas Rainer says, "Traditionalism is unhealthy. It makes the past a point of focus and source of worship. It takes our eyes off what God can do, because we choose to make the way things have been done in the past the way God must work in the future" (268). That heritage of traditional religion killed the vision of the true gospel in both Ethiopian and Eritrean communities. Therefore, these traditionally religious people have to be reached by gospel.

Currently there are six Ethiopian evangelical immigrant churches (including one Eritrean church) in greater Boston. They are trying to reach their native homeland people using their native language in their socio-cultural context. In comparison to these immigrant's populations, the ratio of evangelicals is low. These churches were not growing as expected for various reasons. One of the great barriers to growth is lack of visionary leadership. James D. Berkley said, "There aren't enough people with vision; no one sees how things could be. Yet setting the vision is primarily a pastoral task"(188).

Many church leaders do not see the need for multiplication. Therefore, lack of visionary and servant leadership is the key chaotic problem for the growth and extension/multiplication of the local church.

### **Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project was to identify barriers to growth in Habesha (Ethiopian and Eritrean) immigrant churches in greater Boston, Massachusetts in order to establish priorities for training servant leaders to accomplish church transformation and growth. The training will be specifically tailored for Ethiopian and Eritrean pastors and lay leaders. It will focus on overcoming growth barriers and reversing stagnation and decline.

### **Research Questions**

The following are key questions related to the purpose.

#### **Research Question #1**

What are the leading factors hindering the growth and expansion of Habesha immigrant churches in Boston and New England?

#### **Research Question #2**

What strategies have the churches and leaders of these churches employed to address those hindrances (barriers) and to develop more effective congregational outreach?

#### **Research Question #3**

What priorities and emphases are needed in a projected church growth focused training program for leaders in the churches?

## **Rationale for the Project**

In the actual world, people were conversing about, worrying over, and searching for effective leadership. The first rationale for this project is rooted in the belief that all human beings matter to God. That means that all issues affecting the connections between people are of concern to God. God created human beings in His image to rule and lead His creation. God established this basic law and delivered the authority to humans (Gen.1:26). He creates humans with the capacity to act as his agent in relationship to other creatures. Peter G. Wiwcharuck said, "God also provided all the principles of good leadership, and we shall explore them to fulfill man's leadership role on this earth"(23). The human ruling potential goes with leadership capacity. Biblically, human leadership must bring its full potential for realization to the praise of God's glory. Nevertheless, after the Fall, people must be shaped again in a righteous way, by God's grace, to lead each other. That is why leadership development is compulsory.

The second reason for the importance of this study was Christ's concern for the church's healthy life. Scripture presents the basic reality that the church is a living organism with Jesus Christ Himself functioning as head (Eph.1:22-23). The church, which humans lead today, belongs to Christ himself and is not of human origin. Jesus said, "...my church..." (Matt.16:18). Lawrence Richards proposes,

Our struggle to understand leadership must begin with the recognition that in the church, we are dealing with a living Christ; that this Jesus acts in 'the present age' as well as 'the one to come'; and it is God's express intention that Jesus is to function as 'head over everything for the church, which his body (15).

The intentional activity of the church matters to Christ. Thus, whatever role human leadership may play in the church, it affects his body negatively or positively. That is

why the Apostle Paul gave strong advice to the elders of Ephesians: “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). The overseers are accountable or responsible for every matters concerned to flock of God.

Third, the church does not excel nor endure in continual growth because there is a lack of effective leaders. Biblically, through effective leaders, the church can attain fruitful ministry in all directions. “Measuring effectiveness means establishing whether the desired goals and objectives are being attained. Effectiveness can only be measured accurately where specific objects have been set and related to time. Effectiveness in leadership ensures that the objectives are being fulfilled on time” (Wiwcharuck 301). Effectiveness in leading local churches is key in self-propagation. These days, visible growth in proportion to the current church’s age cannot be seen. At the time of this research, none of the new Ethiopian immigrant churches had planted churches in greater Boston. Effective leadership is needed to shape the future of these churches. The Church has to accomplish the task of God’s mission (the Great Commission of Matthew 28:26) through effective leaders. God uses humans as instruments to lead his people and to bring souls to His kingdom. He exalts where there are good leaders. The book of Judges says, “When the princes in Israel take the lead, when the people willingly offer themselves—praise the Lord” (5:2). Therefore, we cannot overstate the importance of healthy leadership in the church since leadership plays a vital role in the church to fulfill her mission.

The final reason why this project matters was the need for resolution concerning this issue of adequate leadership in the church. Most of the time, problems generated in

the church are a result of immaturity. Nowadays, the motivation and insights for evangelization has died among church ministers. The major chaotic problem for the growth of the church is a lack of decent spiritual leaders. The extension, multiplication, and growth of churches, or an extinction process for a church's journey, laid in the hands of church leaders. Therefore, empowering the church leaders for effective gospel ministry will be the vital part of this dissertation.

Donald Smith states, "A ministry that focuses on empowering connects people to God's resource for living and frees them from bondage to meaninglessness that weighs them down with apathy. An empowerment ministry helps people find God's miraculous power"(10). Empowering fulfills gospel faithfulness. Born again Christians believe that the gospel by itself is the power of God to transform life. Then training, or continual working, on the life of the church's leaders is vigorous ministry for the expansion of the gospel. Additionally, Malphurs and Mancini emphasize this issue: "Leadership training today has yet to become a priority for most Christian organizations, and we're convinced that until all these changes, they as well as the rest of the world will continue to flounder in the sea of change that ushered in the twenty-first century"(11). Failure to provide adequate preparation for effective ministry leads the churches to fall into lukewarm activity. Therefore, the objective of this project is to attain effective training for church leaders to bring transformation.

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

To sufficiently facilitate the research, the key terms and their Biblical and historical definitions are given here:

***Church Planting:***

"Church planting is that ministry which through evangelism and discipleship establishes reproducing kingdom communities of believers in Jesus Christ who are committed to fulfilling biblical purposes under local spiritual leaders"(Craig Ott and Gene Wilson 8).

***Church Leader:***

A Church leader is simply a Christian leader. Malphurs definition says, "A Christian leader is a servant who uses his or her credibility and capabilities to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction"(Malphurs 20). Some leaders are reliable and influential (2 Tim.2:2).

***Church Multiplication:***

Planting new churches (daughter churches) as a result of reaching unreached people with the message of the gospel. As healthy, living things reproduce naturally as part of their life cycle, churches give birth to other churches (Acts 9:31).

***Discipleship:***

"A Disciple is a follower, pupil, or adherent of a teacher or religious leader" (Freedman 348). In our context, a Christian disciple is a person who is committed to Jesus Christ as his/her master and then accepts and assists in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. Christian discipleship is a process by which disciples grow in the Lord Jesus Christ and are equipped by the Holy Spirit (2Tim2:2-7).

***Effective Leadership:***

Leaders have a servant mentality to follow Jesus' example and lead by serving. This type of leadership inspires others, empowers others, and has vision to fulfill great commission and leading church to the fullness of Christ (Eph.4:12).

***Evangelism:***

Evangelism is the spreading of the gospel by announcement and proclamation or preaching. Gospel means the good news about Jesus Christ (1Co.15:1-4). "The word evangelism refers to the proclamation of the good news that through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, sinful people can be forgiven and reconciled to God"(Tennent 388).

***Transformational Leadership (TL):*** "Transforming Christian leaders stimulates others to think creatively and empowers them to generate innovative solutions to organizational problems"(Wofford 18). TL is the leadership that empowers and motivates others to follow them for the services of God, so far it is governed by the guidance as well as movement of the Holy Spirit (1Tim.4:11-13).

***Unreached:***

Unreached people are people who are not yet evangelized, have never heard of the gospel (good news of Jesus Christ), and those who need to be saved and converted to Christianity (Mr.16:15; Acts1:8).

***Habesha:***

Habesha refers to both Ethiopian and Eritrean people. Historically, it is the former name for Ethiopia. "From modern Latin Abyssinia, from Arabic *Habasha*, the name for the region around the 16th century"(Abyssinian People/ web.12/15/2016).

### **Delimitations**

For this project, the researcher chose to work with lay leaders and ministers whose age varies from 30-60. This age range was selected for the sake of the accuracy of data outcome from matured and richly experienced ministers. In addition, the research will be limited to the people and context of Ethiopian immigrants as well as Eritrean immigrants and their Churches in New England. This study was conducted within the existing and emerging local churches including the church that the author now pastors. Also included are the cultural context and situation of the immigrants in New England.

Mostly the study deals with men since women were not actively involved in church leadership because of previous cultural barriers. The study focuses only on lay leaders who are involved in different church ministries, elders, and deacons as well as a few pastors leading current churches.

### **Review of Relevant Literature**

This project mostly relies on biblical and theological literature for the enhancement of transformational leadership for multiplication of the churches. The first step in understanding effective Christian leadership development is to look through the lens of Scripture, identifying carefully what the Bible teaches about developing effective leaders.

As the Bible provides practical patterns for building Christian leaders, laying the biblical foundation is vital prior to designing and developing a leadership development process. Kenneth Gangel contends, "Our understanding of Christian leadership must properly proceed from theology to philosophy to practical implementation"(121).



Spiritual leadership principles flow from the pages of scripture. Even though leadership development is found all throughout the bible, for the purpose of this study, special attention will be given to Jesus and his model as the ultimate example to follow for equipping effective leaders. Some biblical people were also included for the development and practicality of this study. "These biblical people are only a sampling of many in scripture who endured much, gave much, lived much, hoped much, and enjoyed much because they were convinced of their specific calling to live for God and do God's will" (Cladis 51). These heroes of the bible are often individual leaders with a mission who live it out with conviction and inspire others to follow them.

Some literature, written by theological scholars that related to the research topic, was used as support for this research. Thus, the researcher interacts with and explores various scholars' views on the issues of church leadership and church planting. These include: Craig Ott and Gene Wilson on Global Church Planting; James D. Berkley on Leadership Handbook of Management & Administration; Aubrey Malphurs & Will Mancini on *Building Leaders*; J. Oswald Sanders on Spiritual Leadership; Lawrence O. Richards and Clyde Hoeldtke on A Theology of Church Leadership; Kenneth Gangel, Michael Youssef, and others. These people addressed the themes of effective leadership, servant leadership, the leadership style of Jesus, development of leaders, church multiplication, the task of leadership, mission, spiritual leadership, and church planting. The central point of this research added a new prospective for inspiring New England Ethiopian immigrant church leaders for the multiplication of the churches and/or extension of God's kingdom.

Also included are journals and articles that investigate the theme of the life adjustment of Ethiopians immigrants to the US (their situation in sociolinguistic, cultural and religious context). These especially focus on greater Boston in New England. The literature includes some research papers and narrative of the immigrants' historical background written in their native language (Amharic) as well as penned by native writers. In addition, the researcher consulted the immigrants' community representatives in Boston for additional resources including one person who is working on the immigrant adjustment process in Boston.

The researcher interviewed four lay church leaders who have experience serving on the Board of Elders for many years. These male leaders were selected systematically from different evangelical immigrant churches after considering their respectable witness (spiritual life and integrity) among the Christian community. Some reliable websites were also accessed for information on the living conditions as well as on the current situation of immigrants in evangelical churches in the United States.

### **Research Methodology**

This project used an investigative method design developed from mixed methods used for data-collection. These techniques included the identification of leadership as well as church growth problems in Ethiopian Immigrant Churches (ILP in EIC). These problems were identified through oral observation by researcher and through research methodologies that are described in chapter four. Also, the researcher conducted structured interviews and conversations at early stages of study with three lay leaders, who had been served on the Board of Elders for a long time, and a pastor from Emanuel

Disciple church of Boston, as well as more ministers within the researchers' local church who came from different backgrounds of diverse denominations.

All six immigrants' churches in greater Boston area were included in this project for data collection. Additional interviews were done with the following people: five lay leaders (who are currently serving on the Board of Elders in their own distinct churches), one pastor, and a focus group of six people from different backgrounds and diverse denominations (i.e. from Conservative Baptist, Assemblies of God, a few Lutheran, and Mennonites).

The researcher used a written questionnaire and oral interviews for data collection. Those questionnaires were sent to the participants by email and collected through return addressed envelopes in hard copy. The interviews with ten people were done separately at convenient places, and the focus group members were done as-face-to-face conversations around a table in the church office.

### **Type of Research**

This project used data collection to identify a clear set of factors that reveal a cause and effect relationship between elements of the problem and the leadership behaviors of the church people. The explanation and identification of various factors that streams to the problem were revealed. Therefore, the researcher used mixed methods (both qualitative and quantitative) for data collection.

### **Participants**

Essentially, the researcher has experiences in ministering to the surrounding Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants' churches and knows well about their current situation. For the advancement and accurateness of this project, extra supportive

evidences from participants is required. The scope of the research covered six Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant's churches in New England. Additionally, the study included the Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant believers in the State of Maine whose members are living in Portland and Westbrook.

The participants were chosen from the church planted 28 years ago in the central city of Boston as well as from four other churches located in Boston downtown, two in Cambridge, one in Roxbury, and one in Malden. Most of them are laypersons that were involved in ministering as members of the board of elders. These persons were chosen because most of the surrounding local churches do not have a full-time pastor, including the 28-year-old large church that has around 200 members when this study was conducted. The participants of the focus groups are from a newly planted church where the researcher is currently serving as senior pastor. These focus groups have experience in the house of God and had been active members of core groups when this new church was planted on June 2014 in Malden, MA. All of the group members have been living in the investigation area of this project for eleven to sixteen years, and all of them came from different evangelical denominational backgrounds in their home country as it is mentioned above.

### **Data Collection**

I sent an e-mail to lay leaders/pastors in five Ethiopian immigrant local churches (including one Eritrean immigrant church) and explained my dissertation. In the e-mail, I provided a questionnaire with an assurance of confidentiality and a promise to share the results of the study upon its completion with each person who participated and the church where each one was a member.

For the focus group, I called each lay leader (including elders from the researcher church) and scheduled dates. I conducted the interviews with each person based on the interview questionnaires sent earlier to each representative of different immigrant churches in New England. The interview was conducted in our native language, Amharic, then translated into English. Throughout each interview, I recorded and transcribed notes. The interviews were finished before the beginning of Fall 2017.

### **Data Analysis**

I used standard surveyor tests. The results were analyzed to determine the type of factors which created the hindrances to the growth of immigrant churches. It also revealed the leadership style that lay leaders and pastors exercised. The interviews centered on one concluding idea: What kind of leadership did the congregations hope for from their pastors and elders? For data analysis, I used content analysis for qualitative data, analyzing the themes and the responses to the specific questions.

### **Generalizability**

This study was limited to the leadership styles of Ethiopian immigrant evangelical churches in greater Boston, including an Eritrean church, as well as the fellowship of both Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants in Maine. However, the results can represent a wide variety of denominational and geographical contexts. This study limited the number of participants to thirty-six with the criteria of life maturity in Christ, especially those who had fifteen or more years of ministry experience.

Accordingly, the study findings may be applicable to other Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant church pastors and lay leaders who are struggling to build their leadership and their congregation. The resulting project proposes to assist church leaders, particularly

the immigrant church pastors, lay leaders and others in understanding their spiritual leadership role plus providing them with essential leadership elements for equipping ministers and creating the new transforming community.

### **Project Overview**

The outcomes and benefits of this study will narrow down the problem of unqualified leadership to help these churches outshine other churches for the Kingdom of God. Being a minister to the evangelical immigrant churches in Boston, Massachusetts, the author has an interest in improving the leadership abilities within his local church with the hope of helping other churches of similar polity.

On an academic level, this study will fill a niche in the body of research on training transformational church leadership. "Training could increase the use of transforming leadership behaviors and the leader's effectiveness"(Wofford 189). Training transformational church leadership also can be applied to pastors in several different evangelical denominations. Furthermore, the effectiveness and practicality of the materials for equipping lay leadership will be important in the ministry of church multiplication.

Chapter Two reviews the history of Ethiopian immigrants to the US (including their social, economic and religious status), a literature review on the Biblical foundation for developing leadership, and the theological framework of spiritual leadership. Chapter Three explores, discusses, and explains the design of the study and the research questions. Chapter Four reports the research findings and details the inspirational leadership. Then, Chapter Five summarizes the conclusions derived from the study's major findings with recommendations and offers suggestions for further inquiry.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT

#### Overview of the Chapter

Ethiopia is one of the oldest countries in the world and known by its ancient civilization, writing system, deep tradition, culture. "Although they originate from many ethnic groups, Ethiopians have their own socio-cultural identity which is passed from generation to generation, and each of the nation's multiethnic groups have their own languages. King Haile Selassie (ruled from 1920-1971) centralized the state and expanded Ethiopia's civil society as a counterweight to ethnic forces. He fostered unity through the development of a national army, a pan-Ethiopian economy, modern communications, and an official culture whose main feature was the use of the Amharic language in government and education" (Marcus xii). As far as I know, during his regime, the country kept its unity and peace with Eritrea and become more popular in the horn of Africa where many countries had their own identities.

Ethiopians have their own many languages and their own calendar. Amharic is the national language with its own script and writing systems. "They have their own old religious teachings with its philosophy, ethics with its theory, value with its respect, freedom with its dignity, identity with its definition, and country with its absolute freedom and pride with its patriotism" (Tadesse xxiii). As a result, Ethiopians are always proud of their history, culture, tradition, identity, faith and values. In Ethiopian history and culture, respecting others and welcoming guests or foreigners is a common cultural value. These immigrants have kept their inheritance, all their customs and cultural identity, while they pass through the diaspora process. In "*Gathering in Diaspora*,"

Warner and Wittner wrote, “Today, as in the past, people migrating to the United States brings their religions with them, and gathering religiously is one of the ways they make a life here” (3). Most immigrants became conservative in their belief especially their religious identities often mean more to them away from home in the diaspora than back in Ethiopia. As a result, a feeling of insecurity brings various immigrants to concentrate on religious matters.

In 2016, according to citydata.com/Quora/Ethiopia, "the total population of Ethiopians who are living in the US has been estimated from 600,000-800,000 people. However, the exact size of the Ethiopian community in the USA is not known because they are not enumerated separately in official censuses” (Zemichael, web).

Correspondingly, based on my interview with Benyam Tamene, representative of the Ethiopian Community Mutual Assistance Association in greater Boston, the current population of Ethiopians in greater Boston is approximately 25,000 or more. He mentioned that "starting from 1974, due to changes of the government in the homeland, the massive immigration of Ethiopians to the USA, especially to the New England area, increased exponentially” (Interview, 11/24/15). The migration of Ethiopians had its own long history.

"Since the end of Emperor Haile Selassie’s rule in the mid-1974s, Ethiopia has experienced many conflicts, dislocations of people, and famines.

During the 1980s there was basically an economic collapse. During the period from 1974-1991, the Marxist regime was often repressive, resulting in political and economic refugees. These factors contributed to Ethiopian immigration to the US" (New England’s Book of Acts 57)



Based on my oral observation of Habesha's church population assessment in US, Boston became the sixth major US city as the destination for those immigrants.

The detail investigation as well as narrative of Ethiopian immigrants (their religion, culture, and reasons for the diaspora,) will be discussed in subsequent topics such as the biblical and theological foundations of the dissertation topic. Regarding the church multiplication ministry, Ethiopian immigrant church leaders need to understand the biblical background and establish a sound theological foundation for their churches to accomplish God's will in their immigrant situations.

## **Biblical Foundations**

### **Introduction**

The achievement or accomplishment of Church planting and multiplications intermingle with church leadership. Thom S. Rainer says, "Most church growth literature ranks leadership as one of the most important growth factors in the local church" (192). This is a suitable statement as the growth of any church is mostly affected by its leadership principles. "Churches grow in every way when they are guided by strong, spiritual leaders with the touch of the supernatural radiating in their service. The church sinks into confusion and malaise without such leadership" (Sanders 18). Therefore, the success and failure of the church, its growth, whether stunted or flourishing, has direct linkage with the spirituality of its leadership.

The first step in understanding Christian leadership development is to look through the lens of Scripture, identifying carefully what the Bible teaches about developing effective leaders. As the Bible provides the blueprint for building Christian leaders, it is imperative to lay the biblical foundation prior to designing and developing a

leadership development process. The Apostle Paul emphasized, "...the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2Tim.3:17). Equipping church leaders for the good works, primarily effective leadership for the multiplication of the church is the central point of this project. It focuses on development of transformational leader.

"Transformational leaders use their initiative to lead people to a closer and more intimate relationship with God. Leaders are open to his transformation so they may in turn transform others" (Lewis 232). Such kinds of leaders motivate people for more action by raising their potential and build them for future. So, this chapter will discuss the biblical basis and theological foundation for transformational leadership development, as well as reviewing the background socio and cultural history of the Boston Ethiopian immigrants.

### **Immigrant Ministry**

Immigration of humans has a primitive history. The book of Genesis affirms that God scattered the builders of Babel after taking away their universal language and confusing their tongues, yet His plan was revealed through His chosen people. Likewise, many immigrants are identified in Scripture: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Daniel, Paul, and more. Though they lived as foreigners in a foreign country, they actively lived and did their best while maintaining a good relationship with God, influencing many people in their specific settings. Moreover, they transformed the communities to which they belonged. Likewise, Ethiopian immigrant evangelical believers have a responsibility to undertake an influential role in their life settings. To fulfill this responsibility, they should analyze the present and suggest the direction in which people should go.

From the very beginning of the church's age and her continual journey until today, her growth and multiplication is based on migrant communities. Specifically, from

the close of the Book of Acts, Chapter Five, the church continued to grow and, subsequently, Chapter Six records tremendous periodical growth (6:7). At this stage of its development, the church was composed of two groups of Jews (Hebraic Jews & Hellenistic Jews 6:1). “These were Jews who had come to Jerusalem from all parts of the Roman Empire to settle in the Holy City. Many of them had come on pilgrimages, then, decided to remain permanently. Like immigrants everywhere, they lived in separate communities” (Shelley 18). This indicates the Jerusalem church was composed of both native and immigrants. However, following tough persecution of the church, which resulted in the death of saints, primarily Stephen (Acts 7-8), the believers migrated from Jerusalem and scattered to different parts of the world. The effect of this movement or persecution gave birth to immigrant ministry in NT. So far God used this persecution to start the great missionary work of the church.

Persecution becomes the cause of migrating for the early church and scattering them. “Those who were scattered did not settle down. Instead, they kept traveling from place to place, spreading the good news, the gospel. Acts 11:19 says some traveled as far as Cyprus, Phoenicia, and Antioch. We can be sure they traveled as far as in other directions as well” (Horton 101). Therefore, most of the churches have the nature of immigration. Jesus said, “When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the son of Man comes” (Matt.10:23). This parable shows the church or the true disciples of Jesus does not have a settlement or permanent residence here in this world. Subsequently the church comes out (emigrates out) of the world and always lives as an immigrant in this world.

As the Apostle Peter mentions in the opening of his first letter, the elected people of God live as pilgrimages and the lives of immigrants. He addresses them, “To God’s elect, exiles, scattered throughout the provinces...” (1Peter 1:1). The strangeness of God’s people can indicate their immigrant nature. Born-again Christians are not natives of this world and should not put their hope in the treasures of this world, which will wait for destruction. Therefore, another implication of the church’s ministry be situated to immigrant ministry. That is why Peter pointed out that, the real place of new immigrants (the church) will be in the New Jerusalem. He said, “But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness” (2Peter 3:13). The pilgrim and immigrant life of the church would continue until the coming of Christ.

Before going on to the next Biblical Foundations section on the Bible and leadership, it seems natural to interject some background on Hebesha immigrants in Boston.

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### **Excursus:**

#### **Historical and Sociological Insights of Ethiopian Immigrants in Boston**

#### **Major Reasons for Immigration**

The severe economic difficulties, increased poverty and political instability that have plagued Ethiopia and many other African nations have resulted in the large-scale migration to the US. Ethiopian immigrants came to the US for five main reasons:

Education, Exile, Diversity Visa Lottery, Marriage and Adoption.

**Education:** As Tadesse mentioned, "from 1922 until 1974, which was the end of His Majesty of Emperor Haile Selassie's kingdom; Ethiopian students were educated in the USA and returned home to serve their homeland. But when the military government destroyed Emperor Haile Selassie's kingdom, Ethiopian students were forced to request asylum in countries where they were going to school because they feared for their lives and were unable to work with the communist government" (208).

**Exile:** Related to the 1974 revolution, many Ethiopians were exiled from their homeland to neighborhood countries (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Djibouti), and other countries including the USA. "The political unrest resulted in civil war in the country. At that time, Ethiopian residents and citizens had been facing excessive persecution within our mother country by the military and communist rulers because of our faith" (Interviews). I know that, during that time, the majority of Ethiopian refugees came to the US to avoid this persecution. "After the immigration of 1980, of immigrants from Africa, the number of Ethiopian immigrants is the highest number next to Nigerian immigrants in the USA" (digitalcommons web). Thus, the cause of influx of exiles may contribute the highest number of immigration.

**Diversity Visa Lottery:** People says, "US immigration policy has played a vital role for immigration from Ethiopia". The diversity visa lottery is a program that annually grants permanent residence to selected immigrants based on a random selection of registrants. "This program was introduced as part of the 1990 immigration. For example; In 2003, 5562 young high school and college graduate Ethiopians came to the USA every year, by winning the diversity visa lottery" (Ibid). So, Ethiopia has lost much of its educated manpower. From year to year, the number of Ethiopians who would like to

leave his/her country is significantly increasing because of unstable political and socio-economic forces during both regime (including the current one). Thus, because of the diversity visa lottery, many young Ethiopians are immigrating to Boston and other states, and then the second-generation Ethiopian immigrants are flourishing everywhere.

**Marriage:** Most single adult immigrants in the US prefer to marry someone from their homeland because of many reasons. Except within the church framework, traditionally in Ethiopian culture, matchmakers, the family and close friends, have been responsible for arranging the marriages of any young adult in the family. Benyam said, "estimates show that one fourth of immigrants came to the US by marriage" (Interview).

**Adoption:** "Ethiopian children are orphaned or abandoned for a number of reasons stemming from the country's widespread poverty, disease and other overwhelming social issues. These children available for adoption remain in orphanages until they are placed with a family" (Adopt a baby from Ethiopia, web). Because of poverty in the country some families give their children and infants for adoption to families in other countries. Off course, "the majority of those adopted children, when they grow up, do not identify themselves as Ethiopian, because they have already assimilated with their American parents in every aspect of life in their growing process" (Interview, community representative). These and other factors (like family and close friend invitations) also contribute to an increasing emigration from Ethiopia to the United States.

"From 1980 to 2015, the Ethiopian Refugee community has grown proportionally in greater Boston than in other US cities or states. Currently, most of the Ethiopian Immigrants are live densely in the following locations: Washington, DC; Los Angeles,

CA; Dallas, Houston, TX; Seattle, WA; Denver, CO; Atlanta, GA; Boston, MA; New York, NY" (Benyam, 2015). As stated in the previous pages, during the communist government and political instability, many Ethiopians left their homeland and were scattered all over the world. Massachusetts is one of the states that accepts immigrants and resettles as needed. Therefore, since 1980, many Ethiopians entered the US as refugees from Sudan, Kenya, Djibouti, and other countries. During those same years Ethiopians began arriving in Massachusetts (paraphrased).

According to Getahun's study, "Ethiopian Refugees who immigrated to the US in 1980 were young adults in their early 20s, and 50% of them were single...60 percent of them were aged 20-29, 30 percent were female and 70 percent male" (119).

Consequently, the interviews assessment coincides with these facts, thus make clear, in the last 35 years, the Ethiopian immigrant numbers have increased rapidly. Likewise, "One quarter of the Ethiopians in Boston are children, while the majority are young to middle aged adults (aged 18-50). The population is about 60% male. 80% has only limited English proficiency, while more than 15% completely lack English language skills" (Mutual Assistance Association web ,2).

### **Adjustment Process**

Ethiopians, like any other African immigrants, also face several challenges in the new world as they find their place in American society. The primary problem for immigrants is adjustment. According to the evidence of the community representative office, "many Ethiopian immigrants in the greater Boston area are young people and unmarried. The immigrants face various problems upon arrival such as culture shock, and linguistic, and economic challenges". But, in terms of sources to help in the adjustment

process, Ethiopian immigrants help each other; mostly they associate with their own people. The Ethiopian immigrant's primary sources of support are family members, friends (especially those who sponsored them), and churches.

### ***Culturally***

Socio-cultural adaptation is the key issue with which all Habesha immigrants struggle. Since Habesha have strong bonds and a culture unique from that of western society, they need time for adjustment. Getahun says, "This cultural background has caused some Ethiopian immigrants to be labeled as unskilled or even as persons with mental problems. Cultural misunderstandings can result in prejudice and discrimination, with the result that new immigrants, already struggling with an unfamiliar language and confusing cultural changes" (60). Thus, excessive work is required to overcome the impact of those negative attitudes. Henceforth, the churches should take responsibly to solve such kinds of problems.

Primarily the church helps immigrants to maintain their cultural traditions. "Churches bring individuals together, binding them into a community with regular face to face interaction and rituals" (Warner and Wittner 298). So, the existing immigrant church plays an intermediate role to teach and show the immigrants in practicing and adjusting into a new culture. Obviously cultural discomfort is minimized through involvement in community interaction. These immigrants celebrate their holidays as well as the hosting country's holidays. They are interested in naming their children with different Ethiopian ethnic names to transfer their identity to the next generations. Most of the immigrants write, read and communicate using their native language. They are comfortable with their



socio-cultural identity. So we use these cultural assets in worship service as well as in mission work.

I interviewed a Christian brother, who is currently serving in holistic ministry with the North American Evangelical Church Fellowship (NAECF), as well as African Community Economic Development of New England (ACEDONE), Roxbury. The goal is to help in the adjustment of Ethiopian and Somali immigrants. In our discussion, he made the following observation, “The majority of immigrant’s fit that life in America is stressful, but more than half of the population experienced psychological problems. The majority want to keep and use their culture, and prefer integration over assimilation. Also, the immigrants prefer to be identified as “Ethiopian” and Ethio-American” by their nationality, instead of “black” and “African American” (Lebeza, Interview). Even though Ethiopian immigrants agree living in America is stressful, most of the respondents deny that their adjustment process affects their psychological wellbeing.

### ***Linguistically***

As mentioned above, Ethiopia has different ethnic groups with their own languages. Most Ethiopians speak two languages: their mother tongue and the national language, Amharic. English, used in higher education centers only, is a third language for the majority of Ethiopian immigrants to learn. Yet, the unfamiliar use in Ethiopia which makes it hard to learn it well in America. Peter Cha and Helen Lee stated, “Largely because of language and cultural barriers, Asian immigrant churches have not been actively involved in the ministry of mercy and justice in their own geographical communities” (17). This statement also applies to the Ethiopian immigrant church situation. In our interview, the leading pastor of Emmanuel Disciple Ethiopian Church,

confirmed this issue: “No Ethiopian immigrants try to witness to (evangelize) the English-speaking community, because of language and cultural barriers(Interview).

Therefore, homeland born Ethiopians who have migrated have various challenges in assimilating to American Culture. Arriving in the new world with a different socio-cultural identity, the adjustment process to survive in the new environment, integrate and acculturate in the host country’s culture and tradition is challenging for immigrants. This has caused Ethiopians to be misunderstood by the people with whom they live, work and learn.

### ***Economically***

Ethiopian immigrants face problems during their arrival. The adjustment process requires understanding a hosting country’s culture, language, social and legal obligations. “In any immigrant population, the adjustment process is not easy because of environmental changes, cultural gaps, language barriers and difficulty in finding jobs” (Alemu 40). The majority of Ethiopian immigrants in Boston are expected to overcome the challenges of finding a living, housing, jobs and even education and training for a particular job. Most of the newcomers depend on relatives and friends. These friends and relatives are able to provide temporary residence for the new immigrants until they are able to situate themselves. They also provide the new immigrants with important advice on how to survive in the United States.

Tadesse asserts, “Ethiopians face economic stereotype because they came from a poor African state. Because of their skin color and being new immigrants, they also face racial stereotypes given that American culture expresses negative stereotypes for dark complexions” (79). These problems also create considerable obstacles for Ethiopians.

Also, Benyam noted that the Ethiopian Community Association office in Cambridge has to take responsibility to help immigrants make an adjustment in many ways. This office provides orientation, advice, information and sometime assists immigrants in finding jobs and necessary training that keeps them from frustration and preserves their mental health (Benyam. Interview).

### ***Religiously***

Many Ethiopians are traditionally spiritual and are followers of Coptic orthodox, Islam and other religion. The religious institutions, especially the churches in the United States, are gathering places for the Ethiopian community, where Ethiopian expatriates come together to pray, socialize and support one another.

Concerning immigrant religion, the interview focused on two respected, well-known immigrant persons who are very aware of the immigrant situation and maintain deep connections with Ethiopian community affairs in greater Boston. According to their responses to the oral research questionnaires, there are strong ethnic divisions among the Ethiopian diaspora community. One division is based on their ethnic or nationalistic status, which is primarily rooted in the language they speak; the other is by religion, which plays an important role in the life of Habesha immigrants. It is known that; the United States Constitution gives absolute freedom for any immigrants to practice their religion without hindrance. This helps immigrants to build or buy their own churches and practice their religion in their native language. Actually, the new immigrants get together every Sunday to share not only religious practices, but also share community. Churches provide places to meet other immigrants which helps to establish their community. Karen J. Chai states in *Gathering in Diaspora* that “Religion in the United States is an accepted

mode both of establishing distinct identity and of intercommunal negotiation” (Warner and Wittner 299). That freedom or legacy has produced various sorts of immigrant churches.

The diversity of religion among the Ethiopian immigrants follows its proportion in the homeland population. Thus, the majority belongs to the Ethiopian Orthodox church, followed by Protestant or evangelical churches. There are also some immigrants who adhere to Islam, as well as a few Catholics. Ethiopian community representative officials indicate there are five Orthodox churches, five Evangelical churches (including one Eritrean church), one Catholic Church and one mosque in greater Boston; all are recognized as Ethiopian immigrant religion organizations. “For many individuals living within the Ethiopian Diaspora, traditional talk tales, holiday events, and spiritual events act as a uniting social force that allows Ethiopian immigrants in the US to explore their shared culture and identity” (Solomon 175). So, every religious organization serves the immigrants not only for religion purposes but also as a means of adaption and a tool for establishment.

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### **Leadership in the Biblical Context**

Under this subtopic the researcher will try to describe from the Bible the general responsibilities and/or requirements of church leaders.

First, leadership is a ministry of shepherding because shepherding is the leadership style of Jesus. He says in John 10:11, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” Jesus as “The good Shepherd placed the needs of His sheep first; even going to the extreme of pouring out His life for them” (Youssef

30). Therefore, shepherding is the foundation for all others church leadership tasks. That is why the Apostle Paul illustrated the issue in Acts 20:28: “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.” Hence, the leader of a church must follow the footsteps of our chief shepherd, Jesus Christ. The shepherd is not a burden over the sheep, but he always leads them within a context of mutual love and willingness of the flock. Susan Baker says, “Christian leadership is intended for the advantage of all, not just for the advantage of those who hold positions of authority, and good and successful leadership is to a considerable degree dependent on the willing response of obedience and submission on the part of those who are under authority” (255). Not only are the shepherds to know the sheep and take responsibility for them, but also the sheep are to know, that is, to respect, appreciate, and submit to the shepherds whom the Lord appoints over them.

Second, the motives of church leaders are key. Peter said, “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as over seers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be, not greedy for money, but eager to serve” (1Pet. 5:2). Therefore, the true leader is concerned primarily with the welfare of others, not with his own comfort. “Peter urged us to follow the footsteps of the chief shepherd, Christ. Leading like Christ requires us to find the holy ground of down and out” (Robinson 27). We see in the gospel of Matthew that the crowd followed Jesus when he came down mountainside. He wraps up his teaching in Matthew 25 by identifying himself with the poor and the hungry and the imprisoned. “He shows sympathy for the problems of others, but his sympathy fortifies and stimulates; it does not soften and make weak” (Sanders

125). A shepherd will always direct the confidence of others to the Lord. He serves for the opportunity of others, to help them. Daniel Sinclair expounds Peter's instruction for church leaders as follows;

Leadership is not about being a big shot. It's not about somehow enhancing the respect people might have for us or about enjoying the perks of position (which are almost nonexistent in this work of pioneer church planting anyway). Rather, it's about gifts and calling, and willingness to take initiative and responsibility, to shepherd, lead, and feed God's people in a way that hopefully makes good things happen for Christ's sake (159).

Sometimes leadership requires a person to let go of their personal interests, thus, paying a price for the Lord and his people. These principles and requirements were also used to select leaders in the Old Testament. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law said, "But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials..." (Ex.18:21).

Third, wisdom is a basic Biblical requirement for leadership, and is even one of the requirements for subordinate leaders in the early church. The apostles say, "Brothers, choose seven men from among you are known to be full of spirit and wisdom..." (Acts 6:3). Also, James writes that leadership is almost synonymous with wisdom. "Who among you is wise and understanding? let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom... the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy" (James 3:13,17). Only by the spirit of God can leaders operate in this kind of wisdom. Wisdom is the means of making the use of knowledge. Sanders says, "Wisdom is heavenly discernment. It is insight into the heart of things. Wisdom involves knowing God and the subtleties of the human heart. More than knowledge, it is the right application of knowledge in moral and spiritual matters, in handling dilemmas, in negotiating complex

relationships” (57). Obviously, knowledge comes by study, but wisdom comes by the filling of the Holy Spirit. Then a leader can apply knowledge correctly, as the Prophet Nathan used it to point out the sinful action of King David (1Sam.12:1-15).

Fourth, a healthy leader is the one who works with a team or group of leaders. The New Testament church leadership must follow the pattern our Lord used with His twelve disciples. “A good leader makes decisions after listening to a group. The followers are happy to follow the leader if their collective desire is reflected in the decision making or the leader gives clear decision” (Moreau and Snodderly 181). When a leader submits himself to the group members, his accountability will keep him normal. One-man leadership can lead to a dictatorship style. “The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two...” (Luke 10:1). The term “two by two” is a key principle for leadership of the Lord’s bride, the church. Of course, in team leadership a pastor (who has a divine calling to lead and shepherd) should have a powerful voice in the decision of spiritual matters. Hence, the Bible affirms that the church needs leaders in plural form. “It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers” (Eph. 4:11). Paul does not use these titles in the singular (apostle, prophet, pastor, etc.). Thus, a leader must multiply himself, as Paul prepares Timothy, Titus and others to be leaders.

Consequently, the true biblical framework of leadership rejects leading individually. Sanders states, “The leaders must multiply themselves by developing younger leaders, giving them full play and adequate outlet for their abilities. Younger people should feel the weight of heavy burdens, opportunity for initiative and power of final decision” (147). Biblical leader is always looking for the next responsible taker

person. Hence, a leader must provide subordinates with opportunities to exercise and develop their power. Fundamentally, a church leader should have to reproduce other leaders. Paul ordered Timothy to do this, saying, “The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others” (2Tim.2:2). This verse is the main scriptural leading for all the entire part of this dissertation. The Biblical context of leadership responsibility is to train others to lead for it is major part of the great commission (Matt.28:20)

### **Inspiring Church Leaders**

Jesus set an example for us to inspire the future leader. He had been working hard in preparing His disciples almost from the time He called them that He would not always be with them. He spent most of His earthly time on preparing and inspiring the disciples. Similarly, “a leader’s first task is to ensure that the best possible replacement is being trained and prepared to step in when he or she can no longer lead” (Briner and Pritchard 126). Thus, church leaders must give attention to preparing their successors.

Why inspiring leaders is so important? Evangelizing the world and church planting is the key ministry during the closing of our dispensation. All of Scripture points to the reality that bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations is now the central drama on the human stage. Daniel Sinclair says; “What stands between us and the end of history? Only one thing: reaping a harvest among the remaining people groups for whom the gospel has not yet taken root, through establishing healthy, indigenous churches” (vii). Today, the greater challenge to the church is in fulfilling our Lord’s Great Commission, which is multiplying the church. This truth is ignored by many church



leaders. Yet, the ministry of awakening, motivating, and inspiring leaders is currently vital toward the closing of history.

People need to be inspired or lifted up to function with their spiritual and natural gifts. Fred Smith says, “Leadership requires courage. Once a leader decides his part in life and his endowments and responsibilities, he then acts with courage to tackle the problem” (170). Courage helps leaders to resist many scenarios on the path of ministry. Inspiring is one part of encouraging work for leaders. Hence, leaders need to be motivated and encouraged to implement their vision. Carson Pue also says,

Today, thousands of young leaders are passionate about their vision for ministry. But, to turn those dreams into reality, they need to be challenged to be clear. They need to be exposed to needs and opportunities. They need to be encouraged to be prayerful and reflective until their vision sharpens. They need to study models of integrity, to go through experiences that stretch character and build commitment (15).

So, these are the ways helps church leaders to inspire and also build their future ministries. Apparently, God gives potential to ministers whom He chooses to inspire. “Leaders inspire others to their best efforts in order to do better, to attain higher purpose... They must understand how to create and guide innovation” (Weems 10). Thus, this dissertation focuses on the central initiatives or core motives of leadership.

One of the model leaders who inspired others for effective ministry was Nehemiah. Sanders says, “Nehemiah is one the inspiring leaders in the Bible. At the times, his methods seem somewhat vigorous, but they were used by God to achieve spectacular reforms in the life of his nation in an amazingly short time” (165). He was the leader who spent fifty-two days rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem and led a great awakening for the Israelites. Some of Nehemiah’s inspirational words for the leaders of Israelites immigrants include: “The God of heaven will give us success. We his servants

will start rebuilding...” (2:20). “...Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome...” (4:14). “Then I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, ‘the work is extensive and spread out, and we are widely separated from each other along the wall. Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us!’” (4:19-20). He motivated his people highly. Nehemiah tried and challenged his fellow officials (ministers) to have inward confidence and reliance upon the Lord, the proprietor of this great vision. Jim Collins says, “The right people don’t need to be tightly managed, they are self-motivated by the inner drive to produce” (web.12/9/2016). Self-motivated leaders accomplish the task of the mission of God.

Another Biblical model for inspiring leaders was Barnabas, who inspired or encouraged the dynamic apostles of the New Testament. Luke records, “Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch” (Acts 11:25). As the meaning of his name, Barnabas’ was known as son of encouragement (Acts 4:36). “Since he was the one who took the time and effort to find out about Saul and introduce him to the apostles in Jerusalem earlier (Acts 9:27), he obviously knew what God had said about sending Paul to the Gentiles (Acts 22:21)” (Horton 142). God puts precious gift in Paul that needs to be stimulated for practical action. When Barnabas found him, he brought him to Antioch and then Paul began official ministry there. Correspondingly the aim of inspiring leaders is focus on creating biblical vision driven servant of Jesus Christ.

The Ethiopian immigrants’ church leaders in US should be inspired to reach their native immigrant community within their context (in their living area, cultural and linguistic interactions). As Nehemiah did to encourage the leaders of Israelites, so also

Ethiopian church leaders need empowering ministry because empowering leads to effectiveness in ministry. Donald Smith said, “Empowering is the ability to establish a climate in which people feel free to grow, learn, explore, and use their gifts in Christian ministry without fear of retribution” (102). God empowers ministers by His Spirit but the road must be cleared or ready for the work of Holy Spirit. Therefore, the leaders must be empowered by continual & concrete training to help others find God’s power. When leaders are empowered, they bring impact on the life of the congregation in linking the power of salvation to the lost souls.

The major New Testament vibrant model inspirational man of God was, Apostle Paul, who was inspired and mentored by Barnabas. Alongside his ministry of; preaching gospel, planting and nurturing of the churches, mostly he had been worked on encouraging, motivating, inspiring and empowering of the leaders such as; Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and many others. He articulates, “...I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God...” (2Tim.1:6) “Do not neglect your gift...” (1Tim.4:14); “Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you” (Tit.2:15). Thus, Paul’s words of encouragement motivated and inspired his coworkers in the kingdom’s work.

Similarly, Richards and Hoeldtke assert, “The spiritual leader sets an example for the body—an example that compelling power to motivate heart change and motivate others to choose to follow Christ” (115). God gives the gift of serving and leading to His ministers to fulfill His mission. But those gifts and powers bestowed on leaders by the Holy Spirit do not automatically remain strong and vital. The leaders must attempt to preserve their gift, be motivated, and their gift must be inspired as well as fueled by

God's grace through different ways, which will be described broadly in this dissertation.

Inspired leaders are leading their church to become transformational congregation.

### **Transforming Congregation**

Transforming implies to become different in a way that makes the church attractive. A transforming congregation is a lively church, led by transforming leaders. Unless the church comes to transformational life, she cannot resist the current deceitful religious movements. The churches surrounded by Muslims and many other cults religions are especially in need of being highly transformed. Everywhere in the world, one out of three Ethiopians are Muslim that needed to be reached for the gospel through transformed Christians. The early churches were dynamic because of their transformational life. Luke reported, "Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grows in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.....But the word of God continued to increase and spread" (Acts 9:31;12:24). So, the church is always continuing to progress. Ford says,

Every church needs transformations. Those that don't show change die. Don't get me wrong. I am not advocating change for the sake of change. The wrong kind of change can be toxic. Healthy change however is required for growth, maturity, and adaption. Like any organization, churches can become stagnant, complacent, irrelevant, or ineffective without transformational change to keep them focused on their mission. But without a clear understanding of the nature of change, the chances of growing healthy churches are diminished (19).

Transforming churches are those, which prayerfully, ask what God is calling their church to be and to do in the future. They are the churches that want to equip their lay leaders to be visionaries and innovators. Accordingly, transforming Christian leaders empower ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things. Jesus showed the best example for human beings to follow while living on earth. He modeled the principles and

taught his disciples in various places in Gospels (Matt.10:1-42; 28:18-20; Lu.10:1-12).

We who enter leadership positions today hardly do so with the unique qualifications of Jesus Christ, but we can learn these principles, based on the time when the early church marched forward successfully, being missional. David J. Bosch says,

A missional church is a church that is shaped by participating in God's mission, which is to set things right in a broken, sinful world, to redeem it, and to restore it to what God has always intended for the world. Missional churches see themselves not so much sending, as being sent. A missional congregation lets God's mission permeates everything that the congregation does—from worship to witness to training members for discipleship (548).

The transformational congregation bridges the gap between outreach and congregational life, since, in its life together the church is to embody God's mission. A successful and transforming church delivers missional outreach. Furthermore, the first and most central characteristic of an effective, successful transforming congregation (church) is its specific, concrete, missional objectives. "Mission leads us beyond ourselves. Whenever a local congregation is effectively engaged in missional outreach, that congregation is a group of people living beyond their preoccupation with themselves. Precisely because they live beyond themselves, their strengths are commensurately developed, their vision is substantially lifted, and their energies are vitalized to new levels of living" (Callahan 3). Such types of congregations multiply themselves and accomplish their mission task. They are ready to 'do new church' differently than most churches have ever known.

Therefore, the leader should have to look for and concentrate on a powerful transformation of the church. Benner asserts, "The spiritual transformation does not result from fixing our problem and from other mechanical skills or philosophies. It results from turning to God in the midst of them and meeting God just as we are. Turning to God is

the core of prayer. Turning to God is our sin and shame is the heart of spiritual transformation” (Benner 67). When the church starts to confess or seek the face of the Lord in fasting, prayer and repentance, God will shine his light upon her as the scripture confirms on 2 Chr.7:14. The prayerful church can adapt to new strategic growth.

“Transforming churches, over time, develop a coherent strategic architecture—clear values, mission, and strategy. Strategy tells how we will fulfill our mission and achieve our vision” (Ford 190). The fruitful vision and the strategy will come from intimate relationship with God (devoted prayer life). From this place of being with Jesus, we lead others out of a heart of compassion in the fulfillment of our mission as a local church. Like David, we want to shepherd God’s people with “integrity of heart” and with “skillful hands” (Ps.78:72).

The overall health and success of any church depends primarily on the emotional and spiritual health of its leadership. In fact, the key to successful leadership has much more to do with the leader’s internal life than with the leader’s experience and gifts. Hence, in developing a transformational congregation, transformational leadership is decisive. Leadership shifts from “me” to “us” and thinks about being a team first. Transformational leaders know that every person can be used to fulfill God’s mission.

The church can be transformed by transformational leaders. Lewis asserted, "Transformational leaders are transformed by God so they can transform their followers and the church. The result in followers is a heightened level of confidence and outcomes" (242). They help their followers to look toward their reward and the way of achievements, help to go beyond a focusing on minor success, help them to think big things fastened on the hope of the master. Hence, transformational leadership is

stewardship and work on helping others exercise their gifts, not just an opportunity for one person to exercise his/her gifts. Herrington and Bonem added, "The transformational leader helps followers embrace a vision of a preferred future. Leaders inspire and empower followers to achieve new levels of personal and corporate performance. They encourage individuals and support innovative ventures" (96). This inspiration requires the empowering of leaders to accept challenges and to innovate solutions. As clearly stated in Ephesians Four, the role of transformational leaders is to equip and help others to align with God's mission. This type of leader is acting as a coach, like coaching the sports team. So, transformational churches have found a way to "win" by engaging every believer in the work God has assigned to them.

### **Jesus' Model for Development of Effective Servant Leadership**

Jesus's demonstration of servant master was the pillar for church leadership. "Jesus shows us that teaching servant leadership to others is done most effectively by serving others". His practical demonstration of serving others signifies the more effective way of teaching" (Galloway 50). So, there is no great model of servant leader above Jesus. Wilkes said, "For Jesus, the model of leadership was never self-serving. He led first as servant to his Father in heaven, who gave him his mission. If we take a high-level look at Jesus' life, we see that everything he did was in service to this mission" (Wilkes 10). Leading the body of Christ indicates our commitment to the goal of our calling and mission. Our mission is not to serve our will but the will of our master who appointed us to lead his house in stewardship. Jesus' servant leader style was articulated not only by surrendering to his Father's will but was realized in every sense of the concept. For example: The washing of his disciples' feet (Jn.13:1-17) was clearly Christ's specific

demonstration of servant-hood ministry. He is the Lord and teacher but he took the lowest position in physical space as well as humility. In this action of Jesus, we can learn the principle of selfless service and humility to those whom we serve. Jesus emphasizes in his teaching that leading means serving and sets an example for us to show perfect love to one another. This is principal provides a spiritual ministry to lead a church effectively. (Continue under sub-topic 7.3).

Mainly, the effectiveness and success of any organization is centered around its' leadership activity. "Effective leaders inevitably and eventually produce a healthy church body. A healthy church is measured not in terms of its size or the number of its programs, but in terms of its unity and its members who are equipped and functioning in the work of the ministry" (Means 36). Accordingly, the effectiveness of true church is evidenced by the accomplishment of her task—doing the mission of God, which is composed of growing spiritually and numerically—together with self-propagation or reproduction of a daughter church.

Wiwcharuck's definition for effective leadership affirms this fact. He articulates; "Leadership is an art of getting things done through people. It is an art of combining ideas, people, things, time, leadership and faith to accomplish predetermined objectives" (36). Practical action will be used to coordinate and make functioning all God's gifts in the body of Christ. So, anyone who leads the church of God must lead to the accomplishment of her major objective, which is extending the kingdom of God on this earth (proclaiming the good news of gospel). Consequently, leaders should have to create great awareness of mission in people and have to mobilize them toward accomplishment of their priesthood task (1Pet.2:9).



Paul gave warning as well as advice to the Ephesian church leaders saying, “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers” (Acts 20:28). The ministry of overseeing the church means not ruling over or bossing members around. The ministry of oversight is to look and watching how the flocks live a life worthy of the calling they have received. Then the local shepherd (church pastor) helps them become effective and fruitful children of God. "The Gospel teach us that the Savior cultivated and grew leaders. After his death, resurrection, and ascension, the church took on this responsibility, as demonstrated in the lives and ministries of some of its leaders. Thus, not only did the church recruit and select emerging leaders, it trained them a well” (Malphurs and Mancini 98). The Master trained the apostles. Consequently, church leaders should be given an opportunity to be trained on various topics that can mold them and help them to grow in their spiritual life for effective leading.

Sanders says, “Spiritual leadership requires superior spiritual power, spirit never be generated by the self. There is no such thing as a self-made spiritual leader. A true leader influences other spiritually only because the Spirit works in and through him to a greater degree than in those he leads" (28). The leader has to be potentially saturated with abundance spiritual quality life. Then, he can lead others effectively only so far as his/her degree of spiritual life exceeds the life of followers. That is why we pay attention to developing effective church leaders.

### **Launching Step for Effective Leadership**

As mentioned previously, Jesus is our unchanging prototype for effective leadership. The major secret of his effectiveness can be found in his preparation of future leaders among the twelve disciples. He chose and trained the disciples for three and a half

years (Lk.6:12-16). Jesus' vision to plant his future church in Matt.16:18 coincides with the preparation of the leader for his church. So, following Jesus' pattern isn't optional. Seth O. Asare quoted Harding and Mohny's observation of vision as follows; "A church with a vision, that is constantly affirmed and lifted up, will always be an exciting, dynamic energizing center of hope" (xii). This description is factual biblically as well as theologically because without aggressive visionary leaders, there would no growth and extension expected of the church. The fortunes of every local church, whether big or small, rise and fall grounded on the effectiveness of its leadership.

Henceforth the training of leaders matters for sustaining as well as multiplying the church. Malphurs says, "Leadership is the hope of the church. As important as congregational mobilization is to the health and life of a church, it likely won't happen without good leadership. Capable leadership understands how crucial congregation mobilization is and sees that it gets off the ministry drawing board and into the church's life" (233). Good leadership sees things done through others. Thus, leadership has impact on both the negative and the positive, or the brightness as well as darkness, status quo of the church. A leader's effectiveness has a lifelong impact. David Wong says, "Finishing well involves relationships. Towards others, it means the value we place on people, and the difference we make to their lives. What we have accomplished in this world will be measured by the lives of people we have touched. When we leave the world, what will we leave behind?" (26). The effectiveness of a leader measured in his/her physical absence. That means the influential or persuasive leader can promote the mission of God (church planting in our context).

Consequently, the actions and the lifestyle of a leader influences the destiny of the congregations they lead. Likewise, Kevin Ford states, "The true test of leadership is in the legacy, or the positive impact the leader leaves behind. In fact, the very act of defining leadership as a noun—a leader with a certain number of followers—runs counter to true leadership which is all about mobilizing others to take initiative, to fulfill their calling and to make a difference for the sake of the kingdom" (130). Mobilizing others for ministry motivates or drives them to practical action. The main problem in succeeding toward church multiplication ministry is the failure to move from the theoretical to the practical in the area of leadership. Wofford states, "There are many people who can talk about leadership, theorize about leadership, and debate over leadership, but very few people are doing and living leadership" (Wofford 9). Practical leaders are identified by their fruit. The church flourishes and expands through practical leaders. Truly, leading the church means following the practical footsteps of the head of the church, Jesus Christ himself. Therefore, Christian leaders must examine their own leadership skills in light of the Bible or within the pattern of Master.

The great leaders of the Bible times are our central models to follow; Moses, Joshua, Nehemiah, David, etc. The major characteristic of effective leadership is that they share authority and power. "It invites rather than coerces, it recognizes rather than manipulates, it engages rather than separates, and it serves rather than rules. Hence, an effective leader combines logic, experience, intuition, and advice" (142). This kind of leadership brings transformation to the church. Normally, to lead the church effectively to the fullness of Christ, a leader must have vision and the gift. Effective leadership goes with Visionary leader.

The great leaders in the Bible were driven by vision; like Moses, David and many other prophets. Gary V Nelson said, “Visionary leaders assist others to understand what they should be involved with and why what they do is important. They inspire people to accept responsibility for the implementation of the vision and resource them as they develop measurement of excellence” (Nelson, Loc.1100). Visionary leader articulates a vision that empowers people, helping them understand how their efforts contribute to the vision. A clear vision is critical to the survival and success of the church. The distinctive leader, Nehemiah, was driven by a great vision to re build the walls of Jerusalem. Donald P. Smith says, “Seek a vision for yourself and your congregation. Listen to others; learn their needs, their hopes, and their dreams. Be in prayer. Catch God’s vision and stick to it” (47). Hence, setting the vision is the primarily task to be an effective leader. Only God can reveal his plans and he does so on his time schedule, and to whom he wills. “It is critical for leaders to walk closely with the father, so they are keenly aware of his revelation and are ready to respond in obedience to his initiatives. The role of spiritual leaders is not to dream up dreams for God but to be the vanguard for their people in understanding God’s revelation” (Blackaby 71). Leaders are called to serve only God’s will and not our own ambition or agenda. Interestingly, God always gives vision to his servants, those who want to abide closely under his arm. For that matter, the leader must have eyes to envision the future: what God sees for his people, the path of the Church, and God’s kingdom.

The Bible says, “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint...” (Pro.29:18). If leader lack clear vision congregation ends up with mess. The clarity of our vision can affect our ability to walk. Asare says, “Failing vision can take different forms,

and it just happens to be one of the problems in many congregations. Unfortunately, some have not accepted the seriousness of their plight. Others have declared their situations hopeless and will not do anything to remedy the lack of vision and the spirit of apathy” (xiii). The spiritual blindness or lukewarm life of a leader is dangerous in the church as Jesus gave warning in the book of Revelation (3:17). Jesus call Laodicea's church leader for repentance for his poverty to vision. Leaders who do not have vision are going to kill the church. Matthew D. Kim said, “It is utterly indispensable...show me a leader without vision, and I’ll show someone who isn’t going anywhere. At best, he is travelling in circles” (79). Vision is everything for the leader. It provides purpose and allows us to prioritize our programs, events, time, and resources. “Good leaders are persons with a focused vision that attracts the attention and the commitment of others. They acquire this vision through the art of careful listening. They are able to distill what they heard and to focus direction with clarity” (Shenk and Stutzman, Loc.2284). Of course, the visions that drive spiritual leaders must be derived from God. Chris Lowney asserts, “A leader’s greatest power is his/her personal vision, communicated by the example of his/her daily life. Vision in this sense refers not too vague messages and mottoes adapted from the corporate lexicon— ‘bringing good things to life or being’ the super market to the world’; instead, vision is intensely personal, the hard-won product of self-reflection: what do I care about? What do I want? How do I fit in to the world?” (19). Good vision attempts to awaken God's people to move on. God gives such vision to individual leaders that they can lead His flocks to maturity. Every vision must glorify God and not a person. Vision comes from God and involves all the body of Christ, honoring God Himself, edifying and transforming congregations. Effective leadership goes with gifts.

**Serving within One's Own Gifts**

The gift of leadership is the God given ability to lead his people to accomplish God's vision and goals. The spiritual gift of leadership is closely related to the gift of administration (Romans 12:8; 1Thess.5:12; 1Tim.3:1-5, 12; 5:17). An effective leader should have to identify his/her gift and grow in developing this gift. A spiritually gifted leader can empower the people in his/her church to serve with their gifts and encourage them in their spiritual growth. Paul encourages Timothy to nurture and grow in his spiritual gift (2Tim.1:5-6). A church leader must have the ability to organize ideas, resources, and people effectively.

A person who has the gift of leadership is the one who can spread influence and has the ability to make decisions when necessary. Also, he/she must work toward building up his/her team leaders and equipping the saints. According to Kim, "equipping is not a gift that some people have and others do not. Rather it is what each of us is called to do with the gift for ministry he/she has (84). Accordingly, to be effective we must reach the level of developing leaders and delegating responsibility.

When serving with a gift, a leader must additionally depend on the power of the Holy Spirit. Effective leaders must lead the church of God by the power of Holy Spirit. The Lord says, "...not by might nor by power, but by my spirit" (Zech.4:6). There is no success and way of becoming effective without the power of God. Subsequently, a leader must pursue God's anointing and strive for guidance of the Holy Spirit. Essentially, the gifted and Spirit-driven leader can lead the church effectively as well as convey change or transformation to a congregation. Thus, complete dependence on the Holy Spirit is the secret of our success.

## **Knowing Our Gifts and Strength**

In developing effective leaders for ministry, working on individual, natural gifts are important. Of course, helping people to grow in their spiritual gifts is also compulsory. David appreciated the creation of human personality, saying, “What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You...crowned him with glory and honor” (Ps.8:4-5). God honors people and bestows on them precious and wonderful gifts. The problem behind is; we do not accept ourselves. When we know and accept ourselves as God created us, we start to transform. Benner says, “Self-transformation is always preceded by self-acceptance. And the self that you must accept is the self that you actually and truly are—before you start your self-empowerment project!” (56). Knowing about yourself gives the opportunity for a deeper knowing of God, and what purpose he has in our life. Since God accepts us as sinners, we must accept ourselves just as we are.

The main goal of this dissertation focuses on teaching leaders using a short-term training program. Jitsuo Morikawa states, “The role of teaching is not basically transforming information from teacher to pupil, but discerning gifts and capabilities residing in the learner, evoking them to visibility and awareness, that these residual gifts and talents may be developed to the maximum and maturity" (64). There is a vital need to discover our gifts, and talents, and building on them, as well as applying strengths. Paul makes several references to spiritual gifts in his letters including the gifts of the Self, those who have divine calling (Eph.4:11).

Several scriptures point out that our gifts as human leaders may differ, but the Holy Spirit unifies us. “We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us...”

(Rom.12:6-8); “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord: and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone...” (1Cor.12:4-11). Accordingly, all servants of the Lord, who submitted to serve and zealously waited for our Lord’s return, would not lack any spiritual gift (1Cor.1:7). “These spiritual gifts, then, perhaps more accurately can be called ministry areas, or areas of calling. Paul clearly states that these gifts are to be used for the betterment and advancement of the church: ‘to equip the saints (members) for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ’ (Winseman, Cliften and Liesveld 30). One can discover his/her spiritual gifts through practical ministry or exercising service. Then identifying our spiritual gifts will help us to find what ministry God wants to see us accomplish, and the talents are God’s way of showing us how we will accomplish it. Jesus taught about talents on Matthew 25:14-30. These verses are not only talking about money, but the parable discusses faithful and unfaithful service. Faithful service increased responsibilities in the kingdom of God. Unfaithful service led to condemnation and the removal of one’s stewardship. Some talents are given to us when we became born again and filled with the spirit of God; others are given to us at our creation. Thus, we should recognize all of our talents and nurture them. They need to be strengthened. Winesman says; “...you will recognize and appreciate that your talents are not only a gift from God, they are also the foundation on which you can excel and lead a fulfilling life through strengths” (30). I think he wants to say that some of our talents are not gifts received after coming to know Christ (salvation), but they were already given to us with our birth.



All our talents (whether by birth or by a gift of the spirit) are interconnected and enhance each other. Nevertheless, we need to understand them, develop and use them for the edification of the body of Christ, and for a ministry that reveals the glory of God. Generally, the effectiveness of a leader's ministry would come when they live in their strengths. Winesman closes his book by saying, "God has created the one and only you, uniquely gifted with undeniable talents that are the foundation for your strengths. Claim, who you are, listen to God, celebrate your talents, begin in living through strengths. And start transforming your life—and the life of your congregation" (230). Then God wants us to be ourselves. He has a special plan and purpose for each one of us. We must admire and appreciate our talents and gifts. Moreover, discovering our talents will lead us to discover our calling, and knowing our calling will lead us to transformation.

### **Fundamental Biblical Qualifications for Effective Leadership**

The current church crisis is a lack of spiritual leaders. A spiritual leader is the one who discerns where God wants His people to be and takes them to that point through God's methods by reliance on God's power. God wants people to be in spiritual condition and in a life style that displays his glory and honors his name. Spiritual leadership does not dictate but directs people to God. Chris Lowney argues, "The leader figures out where we need to go, points us in the right direction, gets us to agree that we need to get there, and rallies us through the inevitable obstacles that separate us from the Promised Land" (14). Leaders should display the path way to their destiny—Jesus for the followers. Jesus wants leaders to lead his flocks to the knowledge of His fullness, continually direct them and connect people to God. Paul clearly describes the reason the Lord gave leaders to the church. "...to prepare God's people for works of service, so that

the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the son of God and become mature, obtaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Eph.4:12-13). A spiritual leader seeks to accomplish these responsibilities. Spiritual leaders should have to produce active spiritual members. Our hope in the years before us is to become more competent in accomplishing our mission. Kennon Callahan said, "We need more persons who are willing to be competent, compassionate, courageous, and committed missionaries, and we need fewer who are willing to be only professional ministers. That is to say, we need more persons who are willing to be active in the world in mission and fewer who are willing to be only reactive within the programs and activities of the local church” (xxi). The involvement of all members in doing mission is more matter than doing regular activities of the local church.

Therefore, local church leaders must consider multiplying competent members who have missional minds. The desire and vision of this researcher is to train and/or develop spiritual church leaders for the aim of church multiplication. When the lives of leaders are shaped spiritually toward the deep knowledge of Christ, the church will excel and convey positive missional impact in the society. Means asserts, “Leaders must know God and live under the discipline of the word of God and the Spirit of God.” He quoted John Harris: ‘The personal authenticity of the minister...is the greatest strength of any congregation. The inauthenticity of the clergy is the greatest weakness of the organized religion.’ Of course, the truth is applicable to lay leaders as to professional clergy” (34). Thus, Spiritual discipline and authenticity of the leader are determining factors for healthy growth of the body of Christ. In order to be a spiritual leader, one must fit the

biblical requirement mentioned on Exodus 18:21-24; 1Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 6:1-6. For the purpose of this paper, and to narrow the range of explanation, these passages might be summarized in four qualifications:

### ***1. Commitment***

A leader is one who is dedicated completely to Jesus Christ as his savior and Lord. A Christian leader has to be charismatic, have a passion, thirst, and hunger to know Jesus in all his fullness. Paul says, “But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ...I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my lord, for whose sake I have lost all things...I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection...” (Phil.3:7-10). Paul’s greatest commitment and his longing was to know Christ personally. Those factors place him at the deepest experience of personal fellowship. Wofford says, “Charismatic leaders have a strong commitment to their vision, a need to influence others to pursue the vision, a high sense of confidence, and an optimism about future results” (102). From submission of the heart and commitment to the Master spiritual leadership sprouts. In short, there must be evidence of a burning fire inside a leader to know and obey the crucified and risen Christ, as well as being committed to all biblical truth.

### ***2. Conviction***

A leader must have biblically informed convictions about who God is: about His character, His plan of salvation, His church, all the sound doctrines of Bible, and etc. The right conviction of the leader is his/her habit of learning to be transformed by the renewal of the mind (Rom.12:2) and to think theologically about every dimension of his/her. Henry and Richard say, “Spiritual leaders’ primary contribution is allowing God to use

them in his work to transform people into Christlikeness” (287). Leaders has to have an open heart to fresh guidance of God's Spirit. Likewise, the conviction of the church leader has an impact on followers. In addition, the life of a leader must be transparent. Effective leaders lead openly like Jesus. Bill Robinson writes, “The disciples had an open view of an open leader. Being a Christ like leader requires the same kind of behold ability: it means being transparent. It means taking the initiative to make known what we have learned” (40). A leader’s conviction of faith should have to be transparent for others. Necessary, it should have to be the type that the followers can understand without difficulty. So therefore. a leader must try to stand transparently, graciously, truthfully and sacrificially among those he/she is leading. That is an effective way to minister and lead. Of course, commitment and conviction take time to deepen.

### ***3. Scriptural Competency***

Spiritual competency is one of the basic requirement for effective and servant leadership. Does the leader know how to make his way through the scriptures? Can he/she help others find their way around the sacred pages (2Tim.2:15)? Gayle Beebe writes,

The fundamental task of management is to make people capable of joint performance through common goals, common values, the right structure and training and development they need to perform and respond to change... Effective leadership also requires regular and effective communication. Because people have different skills and abilities and are asked to do a variety of different tasks (48).

Competency with capacity of communication brings effectiveness in leadership.

Therefore, a leader should be capable of stirring the talents of a congregation, organizing all the potential that with which the members are gifted, with, for common benefit and the glory of God. Paul told Timothy to entrust future leaders with ‘sound teaching.’ This

would involve teaching them the truths of scripture, because they, in turn, “will also be qualified to teach others” (2Tim.2:2). Leaders are not only learners; they are also teachers. Malphurs & Mancini assert, “Leaders would be wise to have at least one apprentice to whom they’re teaching the truths of scripture and other ministry concepts that will contribute to their future success as leaders in the church” (100). Therefore, leaders must be competent scripturally to lead successfully.

#### ***4. Character***

A leader of the church should model his behavior on the character of Jesus who set up servant leadership style in his own kingdom. Character formation is other part of foundations for effective leadership. Here, the queries are: - Does the leader exhibit self-control, hospitality, gentleness, a quest for holiness? Is there evidence of dying to the love of money? Is he/she faithful to his/her spouse? Beebe alleged, “The formation of our character creates predictability to our leadership. Predictability, dependability and consistency: these three qualities ensure that our leadership is reliable and motivates people to place their confidence in us. Our effectiveness as a leader is built on trust” (30). As leaders we should seek to be all that the Master calls us to be. It means being above blame as we confess and repent of our sins/failures and seek, by grace, to grow in Christ. Smith says, “Christian success must be built on character, not personality or skill. The great qualities in life are involved in the character of a person, such as wisdom, integrity, honesty, loyalty, forgiveness, and love” (89). Obviously, our condition is more than our accomplishment. In other words, the greatest accomplishment of church leader is to be in good condition. Out of all the Biblical qualifications of a leader, character is the greatest.

### **What Shapes Leaders to be Servants?**

In the process of developing effective church leaders, the theme of ‘servant leadership style’ is distinctive for training leaders for the kingdom God. Bennett J. Sims states; “The servant leader can be anyone, in any station, whose life and work touches the lives of others and influences the character of the world” (45). The life of servant leader can serve as a bridge to presence of God's spirit, because church leadership is not about positions but about relationships—with God and with people. Therefore, a servant leader has the impression of attracting people to the church and bringing impact to the life of saints. Moreover, Sanders’ statement clarifies, “The church needs saints and servants, not ‘leaders’, and if we forget the priority of service, the entire idea of leadership training becomes dangerous” (148). We are not to lead for our own benefit or for what we can get out of it, but for what others, followers, can get out of it that will glorify God. Without servant leadership, the gospel would not be victorious.

Malphurs defines the “Christian leader as a servant who uses his or her credibility and capabilities to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction” (20). Servant leader is one who uses his God-given gift to minister others. In the spiritual world, servant leaders are ordinary people doing extraordinary things for God. Accordingly, Christian leaders serve others without reservation, yet, with all their potential capacity.

Servant leader’s credibility and capability become evident in his/her godliness and holiness of lifestyle. The message scattered throughout the New Testament concerning leadership is that Christian leadership is all about servanthood (Matt.20:25-28; Mr.10:41-45; Jn.13:1-17; Phill.2:5-8). In these verses, Jesus states that his purpose in coming was

not to be served but to serve others, to give life for others. Then, an effective leader in the house of God is one who understands and acts through a servant leadership style, one who follows in His footsteps. Clearly, “Jesus exemplified the life of a servant while offering strong leadership and vision. His investment in the lives of his disciples was the focus of his entire being” (Macchia 116). He demonstrates His commitment to His disciples in John 13:1-17 with His act of washing of the disciples’ feet. The leadership style of Jesus was to demonstrate to the disciples the full extent of His love.

A servant leader should not live for himself and should not seek great things for himself. Leaders are not called to rule others! Instead, leaders are called to serve others and imitate Jesus’s example. Servant leaders do not serve in the church to elevate themselves. As our Lord said, “... the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve...” (Mark10:45). Therefore, we must serve others, being open to support the lowliest of tasks. Donald Smith summarizes the definition of a servant leader: “A servant leader is one who leads in order to serve, who serves the highest priority needs of others, and who prizes the contribution of each individual to the whole” (41). When a leader leads the congregation in such manner, then the members will be healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous and more likely to become servants.

Jesus raises the stakes for any of us who really want to follow His example as a leader. Paul’s letter to the Philippian church traces Christ’s incarnate path, from humility to service to sacrifice (Phil 2:6-8) Robinson paraphrases, “leaving a throne for a manager, leaving a king’s life for a nomadic life, and then consummating those departures for the most ignominious of all deaths means we cannot avoid sacrifice if we hope to lead like Jesus” (104). Similarly, Christ like servant leadership requires a denial of self in service

of other people and higher purposes. This type of leadership flourishes and sustains powerfully the congregation. Therefore, a church leader must submit him/herself to the formation of character continuously. Because "character brings stability to life and ministry" (Galloway 153). Actually, it is the formation of character help us to sustain in life as well as lifelong ministry. Beebe explains, "Character formation is progressive and is never finished. As we go through life, and our leadership responsibilities increase, our character will be tested at new and higher levels on intensity" (43). The process is ongoing until our attitude changes to become likeness with Jesus.' How can we obtain such kind of leadership? Through praying as well as exhaustive training in character development. The following are essential daily practices for all leaders in the church.

First, they need to pray. Continual and increasing prayer life experience is obligatory for a servant leader. Jesus' prayer, recorded in John 17, reflects the theme of the continuing incarnation in us and also gives insight into our mission. Since Jesus Himself dwells in us, we are able to do the work of God in our world. Jesus finished His incarnational life by continual fellowship through prayer with the Father. In the same way, the praying leader can finish well the race of life in this world. David Wong said, "In order to finish our life well, we have to finish each chapter of life well. Life is lived a day at a time. To finish well, we have to finish each chapter of life well. Taking on the whole life may be too much. We can take it one chapter, one phase, one stage at a time" (17). This life can be attained only if a leader is praying daily without ceasing. Paul left this statement for church leaders about his exemplary life: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2Tim.4:7). To finish the whole of our life well, we have to finish every chapter of our life well.



Second, they need to love. We have to consider how leaders can exude great love—the kind of love Jesus showed to people of all backgrounds, lifestyles, and beliefs. "The basic question that every Christian leader should ask is Do I love leading more than I love the people I lead? Or Do I love serving more than I love the people I serve?" (Malphurs and Mancini 56). People need to be treated lovingly and carefully by their leaders. As love is one of the attributes of God, our love for Jesus as well as for His flocks should increase always. "It is in God's design that those entrusted to lead others must first love the people they are called to lead. The incarnation of Christ was based on 'God so loved...' (John 3:16)" (Robinson 30). Jesus's question for Peter before he was assigned to leadership after the resurrection and given great responsibility for the emerging church was about love (John 21:12-17). So, when we pay attention to the lives of our members as Peter commands (1Pet.5:2), trust will build between us. Above all, "leaders need to recognize the trust as a gift and lead with fullness and love" (Scazzero 122). When the life of a leader is rooted in the deep love of Christ and His flocks (Eph.3:14-19), the followers offer their submission to be ruled joyfully and that leads us to serve with the blessing of our congregation.

From the extensive explanation of the character of love stated in 1Cor. 13:4-7, a leader can be molded to the likeness of Jesus. After being molded completely by love of Christ, Paul says, "...who shall separate us from the love of Christ...?" (Rom.8:35). This shows, "He had grown in his understanding of the love of God in the Gospel. e had become stronger in Christ by becoming weaker. Paul was driven by the love of Christ. Love-driven leadership is effective because love is the greater gift. Having true love for God and God's people qualifies for servant leadership.

Third, they need to learn. An effective leader is one who has desire or appetite to learn. Learning and listening are life long process of each Christian. This means, “Learning to know and do the right things more consistently is an enormous goal for a leader” (Herrington's 144). A learner life is a key for the leader to be sustained in the renewed grace of God. We can learn from all kinds of sources, and especially from Scripture. Paul motivates Timothy to study Scripture by saying, “All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness” (2Tim.3:17). Winseman *et al* supplements this by writing, “Learner talents are valuable because they propel you to thrive in a dynamic world where learning is necessary. You can learn a lot in a short period of time” (Albert and Clifton, 21). If a leader has a great desire to learn, he will continuously improve in effective leading. Then the one who is eager to learn will be like a spring whose water never falls.

Peter Scazzero writes that, “The making of an effective leader means that we are constantly learning and discovering new ideas and opportunities to improve our service for Christ” (126). Learning is not only by training but also by having time for private devotion before the Lord. The key issue is creating a memorable awareness with all leaders for the practice of having a quiet time before God on regular basis. Elsewhere, leaders are priests who train others for the practice of priesthood life. The “Priest is one who invites to holiness and meditates God’s word” (Gelder127). If the fear of the word of God molds him, he becomes a servant and does not boast. Sanders emphasized, “Spiritual leaders of every generation will have a consuming passion to know the word of God through diligent study and the illumination of the Holy Spirit” (102). Leaders need personally to follow the model of the disciples to growth spiritually, professionally, and

rationally. Apostles learned well from their master as well as from practical situations: their lives become models for us to follow. Healthy leaders are learning and growing all the time through their entire life journey.

Fourth, they need to be humble. One of the key behaviors of servants and effective leaders is humility. Dickson said, “The most influential and inspiring people are often marked by humility” (19). Humility or humbleness has the power of attracting people. Our Master, Jesus Christ, says, “...take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart...” (Matt.11:29). A leader take yoke of Christ would become to learner, and learner habit lead to humbleness. Jesus also defines servant leadership as the humble service to others based on love for them (Matt.20:25). “Jesus is teaching his disciples that servant leaders lead humbly. The emphasis is on the leader’s humility, not his or her ego” (Malphurs and Mancini 20). Thus, one way to be assured of Jesus presence with His church leader is humility. Therefore, the true followers of Christ must learn from Him and try to practice this dynamic and humble character. Paul also gave instruction for Christians to imitate Christ’s humility in Philippians 2:3-8:

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider other better than you’re your selves, each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself... Jesus took on the form of a servant, and he humbled himself to do the will of his father. Then “Jesus taught humility because it was at the core of who he was. It enabled him to follow God’s plan for his life (Wilkes 39).

Servant leaders must humble themselves like the Master. Therefore, a leader’s humility should grow with the passing years, like other attitudes and qualities.

The opposite of humility is pride. Peter said, “All of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble” (1Pet.5:5). A humble leader is the one who is ready to accept and invite criticism. Thus, humility is not gained by theory but by action. Peter, the prominent person, who was used mightily by God, developed in humbleness, when he was criticized by the Apostle Paul at Antioch (Gal.2:11-14). Scripture indicates that Peter recognized his error and accepted Paul’s rebuke in a humble and repentant manner. He later refers to Paul as “our dear brother Paul” (2Pet.3:15). Therefore, humbleness is a reflection of our daily life and should be a practical action of a servant leader.

A humble leader can respond to the leadership of all who are in authority over him. “As leader, we must have a system of accountability in place so that we are not left to our own devices and ultimately our own deviations from the central purpose of God. We are called to honor and respect the wisdom offered by those in authority over us” (Macchia 124). The central body system of the house of God function is directly connected with humility. So, our character should develop in submission to the authority of others as well as listening to those we lead. Humility teaches a leader to respect the knowledge and practices that every member of the church brings to work every day. Thus, humility and servant hood are at the very heart of Christian leadership. Hence, a leader must exercise humbleness and pray to grow in this virtue.

Fifth, they need to show integrity. One of the spiritual practices that helps leaders to live a disciplined life is keeping and maintaining good integrity. Scazzero writes, “Integrity means walking in truth, beginning first with what is happening inside of you. This kind of honesty takes great courage” (213). Integrity can be described as

blameless. The Apostle Peter urged Christians, in light of Christ second coming, to “be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless” (2Pet.3:14). The most important focus is on being daring by allowing Christ to change us. A leader must learn to foster his personal life in spiritual journey with integrity. “To maintain consistency and grow in effectiveness requires that we establish a foundation of integrity that never wanes. This foundation is established by engaging in the disciplines of the moral life that can sustain us” (Beebe 43). Leader's moral life must be kept pure according to measurement of scripture. This is also gained through committing to daily fellowship with Christ by prayer and bible study.

The primary integrity requirement for church leader is to be with Jesus. Mark wrote, “He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him...” (Mk.3:14). The fountain of true integrity is the master himself.

Cultivating an intentional life with our lord Jesus requires intentionally focused time—for silence, prayer, meditation on scripture, and reading. But we are surrounded by endless distractions and voices that call us away from sitting at the feet of Jesus. Yet it is our only hope for seeing through the illusions and pretense of our world and for providing leadership to those around us (Scazzero 206).

The one who lives in closest relationship with the Lord can speak loudly about Him, and can know the Lord's will for the folks he is leading. Jesus Himself wants to lead and nurture His bride, the Church, through His servants. If leader misses hearing of the voice of Lord, he cannot lead effectively and may end up in a catastrophic life like King Saul (1Sam.15: 23; 16:14, ff).

Another core part of the integrity requirement for effective servant leader is in his/her married life. Thus, Paul focused on this central issue in 1Timothy chapter three and Titus chapter one. He understood that we must minister out of who we are. He

encourages the one flesh union of husband and wife as a foreshadowing of Christ's union with his bride, the church (Eph.5:31-32). As the bride (the church) keep herself holy for her bridegrooms (Christ), same the leader of the church must keep his/her marital life holy. "Our marriages are meant to proclaim and reflect our union with Christ. Our marital union is to be a picture, an experience of receiving and giving the love of God" (210). It is through good example of leaders' marital life that Christ seemed to the darkness world. Thus, the leader should know how to maintain his life in holiness (keeping his moral life, value or identity) and be protected from corruption of the worldly things or ungodly issues.

Effective leaders and ministers should discipline themselves to be corrected and trained in righteousness. Paul's advice to Timothy encourages Godly behavior, "... flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness" (1Tim.6:11). Here the point is to encourage the trainee (whether pastor or candidate leaders, ministers, etc.) to seek godliness through faithful living, which emphasizes displaying the fruit of the spirit (Gal.5:22).

The scripture is filled with promises for the person of integrity: "He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity" (Prov.2:7). "A righteous man who walks in his integrity—how blessed are his sons after him" (Prov.20:7). David says to God, "Vindicate me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity; and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering..." (Ps.26:1-2). The standard of integrity enables the leader to have right communication with people whom he/she leads. Weems asserts, "The priority for a leader is to establish a relationship of trust and respect with the people with whom the leader is working. Everything depends on this bonding"

(128). A leader's credibility is dependent on the quality of relationships and development of trust from the followers.

I conclude with James Berkley's six criteria of recognizing servant leaders: (1) "Servant leaders are secure, knowing God values us; (2) servant leaders find joy in encouraging and supporting staff and team members; (3) servant leaders don't need credit for their ideas or visions; (4) servant leaders are high on relationships and low on control and correction, (5) servant leaders give up the trappings of authority and status; (6) servant leaders base their authority on character, not the position they occupy" (185). These are the behavioral traits that identify true servant leaders. These points are crucial for this project. So, they will be incorporated in the training for developing effective leadership for church multiplication.

## **Theological Foundations**

### **Introduction**

Theology plays great role on the missional activity of the church. Actually "The mission of the church is to be the image of God and to carry on the mission of God. Thus, the missional vocation of the church is to be the community of God, the representative of God in the world" (Franke 174). This community is keeping with the missional character of God. So, theologically there is no church without Jesus Christ because he was the maker and founder of his own divine organism in this world (Matt.16:18). And then it is recognized that the church multiplication is the vital component of Jesus' command aligned with the extension of the kingdom of God. Basically, the church's existence in this world imply that the church is always continually engaged in mission, for the church is the body of Christ the Savior.

Hence, “theology that is properly attuned to its subject (God) and its focal point (the church) will be missional theology” (166). The truth and effectiveness of our theology is focusing on church of God that fulfill the mission of God. Therefore, as the body of Christ, the church is the extension of his ministry till the end of world. Shenk and Stutzman asserted, “Creating Communities of the kingdom speaks at a time when there is an increased emphasis on church planting” (Loc.47). Indeed, the theological perspective of the increase of church planting indicate its growth, and yet, which implies the present and future reality of the kingdom of God. Essentially, “The church is a manifestation of the kingdom of God, the form it takes on earth in our time” (Erickson 1052). She is the representative of the almighty God who defeated Satan and conquered the sting of death by his resurrection power (1Co.15:56-57). This indicate that, as the agent of the kingdom of God, the church must progress on the earth victoriously and authoritatively.

Furthermore, Evangelical Christian believes that, the spirit of God is pushing every established congregation to help create sister churches in communities, both in nearby and in distant places. The question is, does the current immigrant churches leaders really have full understanding of this truth? The answer is not as much. Why? What is the obstacle? A few of answers described on chapter one. But, before trying to find satisfactory answers to these question, it is better to look to some sociological and anthropological bases and problems of the Habesha immigrants’ community’s culture of church leaders. Preferably, the study will focus only on the evangelical church’s’ trend.

### **Ethiopian Evangelical Churches Movement**

The main reason why this sub-topic needed to be inserted here is; the leadership style, worship manner and every spiritual activity of immigrants’ churches in US is



directly linked to back homeland country's situation. Subsequently, the growth ratio of immigrant population is also going parallel to the movement and growth of current homeland country's evangelical circumstances. At present, there is tremendous growth of evangelical and charismatic movement in Ethiopia, but few in Eritrea because of severe persecution. Starting from the year 1991, after the fall of Marxist regime, there has been continual growth of born-again Christian population in both countries among the existing as well as new emerged denomination.

For example; The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) was the first and largest protestant church in the country. As Dinku Bato stated by mentioning the 2010 report of the church, "Since 1959 the EECMY as a national church of unified Lutheran and Presbyterian congregations has grown steadily in numbers and in mission and partnerships. It has over 5.5 million members today, made up of many ethnic and language groups" (176). By now this number might be doubled. Other denominations especially, three other churches (Ethiopian Kale-Hiwot, Ethiopian Full Gospel or Mulu-Wongel, and Meserete—Xristos known as Christ base and Mennonites affiliated churches) are numerically right behind, with many other several denominations. All the same, most of evangelicals and charismatic in Ethiopia have the same outreach program and similar type of leadership characters (styles).

Those and other various evangelical churches, resound with the principle of the priesthood of all believers, which needs sequential training programs in all local churches for leaders. In Habesha's context, where there is no opportunity of engaging ministers in Theological School, training is using as a means of growing ministers to handle the harvest of God properly. A church leader should serve those whom he/she lead by

equipping them to do their part in God's plan. Wilkes suggest five steps to equip others: "Encourage them to serve; Qualify them to serve; Understand their needs; Instruct them; and Pray for them" (189). This is what we are practicing in the past and currently in equipping the huge ministry for the Habesha communities. Because, those practical five steps allow a leader to share his/her responsibility and authority easily. Therefore, training is used as one of the great tools of inspiring the leaders. That is why this dissertation concern about as a major. Then, the researcher will use the above training topics those focuses on the important biblical teaching on leadership to serves and enhance the growth as well as multiplication of the church.

### **Culture and Leadership Background in Ethiopian Context**

From the basic concepts of an anthropological view, the cultures of a society have direct effects on the leadership style. Ethiopia has more than 74 ethnic groups each with its own language and culture. Tibebe Eshete stated that, "religion has always constituted a vital part of Ethiopian society. Christianity, Islam, and African Traditional Religions have invariably shaped the culture, value systems, and social organizations of diverse communities in Ethiopia (1). The Ethiopian culture is diverse and generally structured along ethno-linguistic lines. Importantly this country is one of the earliest nations to embrace Christianity. About 65% of the population adheres to Christianity, which is Ethiopian's primary religion. This includes the established Orthodox Church, plus evangelical and small numbers of Catholics and Adventists. About 30% of Ethiopians are Muslims, with the rest of the other traditional religions ranging up to 4 to 5 % of the population.

The broad African (including Ethiopian and Eritrean) culture has been described as collectivist, where the claims of groups and associations must normally supersede the claims of individuals. The church leadership style in this kind of society is influenced by this culture; the leaders often compromise to make their people happy. The people may be the tribe, family and/or the whole community. A. Scott Moreau quotes Newbigin's definition of culture as follows; "culture is a product of the interaction of human beings in a particular place and time, and then culture must also reflect something of the image of God as well as the corruptions, the distortions, created by human self-love and disobedience" (9). Since culture and personality are the building blocks of human identity, they play a vital role in leadership. Malphurs and Mancini asserts, "If leadership is fundamentally about influence, then the leadership culture is fundamentally about influence in a broader context, namely, the church (216). Then, in the context of Habesha, culture have dominant power in leadership style. Consequently, local church is influenced by its leadership culture.

Many evangelical Christians in Ethiopia came from a background of traditional religion, and some from Coptic Orthodox and Islam. Each of these traditions possibly becomes models for reproducing Christian leaders. "Traditional refers to the myriad of cultures on the continent of Africa. Each of these cultures has its own customs, rituals and beliefs. These customs, rituals and beliefs have been handed down orally from one generation to another and have been observed in a particular way. Some of the traditions are unchanging while others are always in flux. Some are found in other cultures; others are not (McGregor 18). In general, culture is the core of African humanity and holds some of the secrets to life's purpose. Not only in leadership but many cultural practices

such as the expressions of prayers, singing, dancing, making sacrifices, offerings, obligations, and rituals etc. have an impact on the church's life.

### **Some of Leadership Problems in the Given Context**

There are negative trends that reflect the dark side of church leadership in Habesha's evangelical churches. Beyond that, "Leaders have the power to cast either shadow or light by the exercise of their leadership, thus creating the ethos in which others must live" (McIntosh and Rima 47). Leadership can hinder or allow ongoing growth of church life. So, we need to confront this dark side and begin the process of overcoming through sound training. For the sake of overview, it is better to consider some points on the complications of leadership that I observed inside the Ethiopian and Eritrean evangelical churches.

1. In some places, the selection of local leadership is based on seniority, popularity, wealth, or by default. When leaders come through this process, they bring complications into the church, as they try to lead by their worldly trends. In this cause, the leadership becomes a matter of position. As Blackaby asserted, "Much of what passes as leadership—conspicuous position-taking without followers or follow through, posturing on various public stages, manipulation without general purpose" (47). Position seekers aren't free of carnal. Therefore, a leader with the ambition of position create problem in the church.
2. In some places, the diversity of different ethnic groups creates a negative impact on the selections of local leadership. The division problem arose in the early church on Acts chapter six reflect yet again in Ethiopian immigrant churches. This issue was reflected and created big problem around Boston, where the researcher minister. But

- there are some places where people from different languages and tribes worship together in the same church. So, ethnocentrism resides within each culture. Some Christians place their national identity ahead of their Christian identity without even recognizing it.
3. There is a problem with gender diversity, with strong male leadership patterns. Within the context or sphere of this study, the most gifted and dynamic women of God are not appointed into leadership positions. This is the consequence of Ethiopians cultural context, which is habitually makes males dominating or superiors over the females. This differences in the church sometimes can hinder their work of God.
  4. People coming from a hierarchical cultural background regard individual and egalitarian leadership as offensive and disrespectful. Mostly old people are respectful in each decision in all society. This honor-shame based culture has made an impact on implication of spiritual leadership style. Hiebert said, “Class and ethnic hierarchies are accepted as normal elements of social organization and justify why some are richer and others poorer, some leaders and other followers. This concept of hierarchy has influenced the modern church” (189). The old rituals various cultures of Ethiopians bring negative impact on spiritual leadership of the church.
  5. Some leaders misuse power in the church. This is the great challenge in most of the Ethiopian and majority world. Paul Borthwick states the cause of this issue as follows; “perhaps it results from the exportation of western individualism through colonialist mission endeavors or from the human inclination to exert power over others. Perhaps the cause traces back to cultural roots in which people conquered

others and the lesser were forced to submit” (95). Such types of leadership which came from the trend of superior of one over other’s, is a vital problem in Ethiopian and all African context. Whatever the cause, the use of un-balanced power in leadership results in the dangerous supremacy of leaders in the church. It is the manipulation of human power when some claim negative authority over the lives of other. Most of these leaders are self-appointed leaders, who call themselves prophets, apostles, pastors. These leaders often present themselves as infallible, and far from the idea of servant leadership. For example, some of ministers who have the gift of healings and miracles have become the front source of this problem.

The above issue by itself resulted into two big problems in the church. First, such types of leaders do not want to pass on leadership to others. Whereas servant and missional leaders have to exercise the concept of sharing leadership responsibility. Secondly, there are the explosive growths of new denominations. “Leaders who hold on to power and refuse to hand their ministries over to others leave the creative, gifted younger generation little choice (97). Because of this opinion, the church of Ethiopia seems to be getting more fragmented, like the description of the people of Israel during the age of the Judges, when “everyone did as they saw fit” (Judge 21:25).

6. The local leaders are not often focusing on evangelism and making disciples. Because of this, there are scarcities of mature pastors, leaders, ministers, etc. so the churches cannot make an impact on society. This is all about neglecting great commission that Jesus commissions the disciples to go out and replicate themselves by creating communities of obedience among nations (Matt.28:18-20). “Mission is replicated discipleship, learned through ethical obedience and passed on

through teaching” (Wright 391). Without making discipleship, good leader wouldn't be expected. It is from making disciples that leaders can reproduce.

7. Some leaders focus on the prosperity gospel. In their congregations, people come to the church to seek healing and looking for miracles and personal blessing. Of course, this is not only a problem in Ethiopia, but it is the problem of the whole African continent. “The problem with the prosperity gospel, of course, is that faith is not a formula or a divine ATM at which the proper code guarantees a release of funds or health... people accept Christ in hopes that he will lead them out of poverty. When their situation in life does not change, they may abandon faith, concluding that ‘trusting Jesus doesn’t work” (Wright 100). It is observed that such kinds of ministry may sometimes come to be stumbling blocks for the expansion of the kingdom of God, because sometimes non-Christians (Muslims and others) mock about it.

Therefore, all of the above points on current leadership problems (shortfalls) are the outcome of cultural trends and behavior that a Christian leader should have to correct. Church leaders are responsible for the health of the body of Christ. So how can biblical principles of leadership be applicable (contextualized) in Ethiopian culture? What is contextualization?

Contextualization is the term that has been coined to express the legitimate integration of the situational perspective into ministry concerns. What difference should the context (place, people, culture, etc.) make in ministry, in how understand leadership? It can sometimes be a delicate balance to find. If the context is not considered at all, calcification occurs, a hardening that does not consider the concerns of various cultures (Baker 259).

Most of the above-mentioned problems come from non-contextualization, and obviously the mainstreams of Ethiopians and African churches have copied the western style of leadership. Accordingly, the above seven points (1—7) are also conveyed a terrific negative impact on the growth of the majority of Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant evangelical churches. This project is designed to describe how to solve those problems and make a balance for cultural engagement not to overshadow biblical principles.

### **Weaknesses and Challenges in Leadership**

The weaknesses and challenges of church leadership in Ethiopian context are mentioned in previously pages. There I mentioned that the root cause of those problems sprouted from cultural background. But I believe that, the authority of the word of God must over rule (dominate) all circumstances of our life and any cultural barrier. The major weakness of immigrant church leadership that result in great challenges is mix-up of spiritual leading with others type of leading. First of all, a leader should have an understanding that church leadership and administration is spiritual, not a copy of the world or natural. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Paul said, “If a man’s gift is leadership, let him govern diligently (Rom. 12:8). It has to do with stewardship of what God has given us to do in this world and leading with diligence. Also, it requires being mature spiritually before becoming a leader. Paul encourages us to become spiritually mature in 1Cor. 2:12-3:1-4 and Gal. 6:1. Mature leader focus always on accomplishment of church mission.



Sanders contrasts natural and spiritual leadership as follows:

<u>Natural</u>	<u>Spiritual</u>
-Self-confident	-Confident in God
-Knows men	-Also Knows God
-Independent	-Depends on God
-Makes own decisions	-Seeks God's will
-Ambitious	-Humble
-Creates methods	-Follows God's example
-Enjoys command	-Delights in obedience to God
-Seeks Personal reward	-Loves God and others (29).

Truthfully, spiritual leadership blends natural and spiritual qualities. Of course, leaders can be born or made, which discuss in the previous pages, under the topic of Biblical foundation through training. Here the researcher emphasis is acknowledging that leading the house of God is completely different from natural (ordinary) and worldly leadership of organizations. Even if the leader is naturally born, the Holy Spirit reshapes and releases qualities that were dormant beforehand to service in God's spiritual house.

The leadership problem of most of the churches in Ethiopian as well as Ethiopian and Eritrean Immigrants would be solved in this context. And also understanding of spiritual leadership would not consider gender difference. Today there are dynamic gifted women leaders in Ethiopia. Currently, the churches are using women in preaching, deacon, healing and other ministries but do not trust them in leadership, because of influence of cultural background mentioned in former pages.

Another challenge is misuse of authority. Church leaders in Ethiopian immigrants should have to come to the full understanding (awareness) of biblical authority in leadership. Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” (Matt. 28:18). All authority is the Lord’s. Ultimately, “All authority in the church belongs to Christ. From his place of authority at God’s right hand, Christ gives the keys of his kingdom; he validates in heaven what is done in his name on earth (Baker 52). The key issue is how to exercise authoritative leadership in the church, which needs balance in usage. Of course, every human authority is delegated from the Lord above. Paul writes, “Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established, the authorities that have been established by God” (Rom. 13:1). As researches observed, the problem in Boston Ethiopian immigrants’ church is mostly not from the members who are expected to obey their leaders, but it is from the misuse of power and authority by the leaders.

What then is the authority of leader and what is its application? “The exercise of authority in the church must always be grounded in the scriptures and, conversely, loses its legitimacy when it calls those under its care to ignore, contradict, or contravene the truth found therein (253). Spiritual authority that is based upon spiritual authenticity is demonstrated in the following ways:

(a) Ethical leaders influence people by being a model in true Christian discipleship, as Paul says, “...make themselves a model for you to follow” (2Thes. 3:9). Greg Ogden said, “A disciple is one who responds in faith and obedience to the gracious call to follow Jesus Christ. Being a disciple is a lifelong process of dying to self while allowing Jesus Christ to come alive in us” (24). A leader who died for his/her ego can

attract people to follow. It is practical living of discipleship that makes people to follow and obey us.

(b) Good spiritual leaders are the one who teach scriptural truth, especially emphasizing their teaching on the cross of Jesus. Their authoritative use of power ethically flows from powerful teaching. Furthermore, spiritual leaders are teachers whose teachings are validated by their lifestyle.

(c) A leader should be best at submitting to the legitimate authority of other leaders. It is one of the identifiers of his accountability, because he is fervent about the task for Jesus' sake.

As Means indicated, "Spiritual leaders are meant to influence opinion, induce belief, and lead people to action—and to do so ethically. The proper authority of spiritual leaders lies in their spiritual authenticity, the validity of the word of God, and the ministry of God's spirit demonstrated in their lives" (Means 120). The grace (fresh anointing of Holy Spirit) that flows in their life is determining the quality of leader. Good spiritual leaders do not bother with rank, position and do not even keep focusing on their authority. They can have ethical power as models, instructors and guides when they behave according to biblical guidelines. To the influence and input of such kinds of leaders' people respond positively, because of the quality of their lives, accomplishments, experience and wisdom.

According to the researcher observations from many years of ministry experience, the challenges of multiethnic and cultural diversity in Ethiopia and Ethiopians immigrants' have contributed to the problems and lack of effective leadership. The wise handling and a way of overcoming problems needs maturity that comes from training and

sharing experiences. Currently the immigrant's evangelical churches in many states do not want to strengthen their fellowship and unity. But unity in diversity is possible that enhance the multiplication of church.

Moreau supposed, "By working together, the true body of Christ can bolster the cultural weaknesses of one with cultural strength of another, and in so doing, help to expand God's glorious Kingdom" (194). There is victory in the unity of believers, ministers, and local churches. One can handover others problem within the love bondage of saints. These methods of solving problems and effective leadership of the church are not gained only by theoretical teachings but also by learning from failures and successes, as well as from the bond of love with others (children of God). These day there is a dozen of conflicts among Habesha immigrants churches that chop the expansion of gospel.

### **Leading through Conflicts**

It is necessary to discuss this topic here because many immigrants' church leaders in US escape from leading through conflict. That is why the growth of the church become stunted. A leader may appear strong in action and accomplishment. But the most acute test of moral authority comes when facing temptation or hardship. "Knowledge of and preparation for, temptation is imperative. If God is calling you to a position of leadership, know that there will be very powerful temptations" (Briner & Paritchard 13). When a leader successfully resist temptation, he/she can exercise the presence and revelation of God. The difficult and inconvenient situation serve to purify and clarify leadership. Sanders asserted, "A true leader steps forward on order to face baffling circumstances and complex problems" (133). The true leader detected in the way how he/she face

impossible situations. Then, a leader has to realize that there will be conflict in leadership journey.

So, the servant of the Lord may be tested through different paths. Following Jesus and serving him involves taking-up of cross (Luk.9:23). Jesus said, "...Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you...be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Luk.6:27-36). There is no easy way for leaders. We will come across various disagreements, misunderstandings, and distinctions with various views of moral and value stands that will interfere in our relationships with one another.

Conflict is inescapable. Because of the major differences between human beings, it is a wonder there actually is not more conflict than we already experience. The problem is not conflict itself but how people relate to one another when they are in conflict. Conflict is both good and necessary because it reflects different points of view, clears the air, and makes it possible to resolve extraordinarily complex issues (Osterhaus, Jurkowski and Hahn 14).

Therefore, conflict is a normal spice of Christian life specifically for leaders, and an outgrowth of our sinful nature over which we are supposed to have dominion. Conflict management is necessary for a healthy church and it can be minimized if it is planned and managed in biblical ways or standards. Nonetheless before going to find solution, let us look shortly to the cause of conflict not only in the Habesha immigrant churches but in common.

### **The Cause of Conflict**

There would be different kinds of conflicts in the church; group conflict, individual conflict, staff conflict, memberships, etc., Why we do have conflict? The Bible

has the answer. We human beings love to be in competition and fights; But God's calling in our lives is for a special purpose. James takes us directly to the root cause of fights, quarrels, wars and conflicts; saying, "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come among your desires that battle with in you? You want something but don't get it ...you quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures" (James 4:1-3). They all come from one source, and that is the conflict that resides in our flesh (heart). It is the war of good and evil men versus God, our sinful nature versus that the new life in Christ. These desires conflict with the desires of other people and escalate into interpersonal conflict and all-out war within the body of Christ. Osterhaus said, "Conflict is never about the other person. It's always about me. Dealing with conflict teaches me about me (103). The driving force of conflict is me. Therefore, the crucial portion of conflict is that arises from within our own self.

The other direction is; a leader can face unexpected conflicts from fellow co-workers, ministers, etc. These are conflicts with various views of moral and value stands. As Kim stated, "Ministry can be far from tidy, and nothing can fully prepare us for what lies ahead. In this ongoing war for souls, we are not shielded by a bunker in the sand. Rather, we're exposed and completely vulnerable to all forms of attack" (107). But we should understand that God does not leave us in our tragedy but changes it to good; and he can use His servant in the midst of tragedies. He used both Paul and Barnabas in their conflicts and in their different directions and opinions (Acts 15:36-41).

## Managing the Conflict

Leading through conflicts needs good management. The first step in proper conflict management is to understand ourselves. Osterhaus advised “self-awareness allows you to be able to manage yourself. Once you are able to manage yourself, you are able to understand relationships (and the conflicts that relationships always involve.) and, as a consequence to better manage relationships (101). The awareness of our self’s weak side and other people’s conduct is important to the positive treatment of conflict. Our first responsibility is to realize the disease we impose upon one another by our sinful nature—the gossip, slander, faction, etc.... (Gal.5:16-19), their causes and cures.

There are many spiritual passages on how we can understand, solve and prevent conflict. Anyways developing resistance through the grace of God is primary. We need to remember always that love covers a multitude of sin (1Pet.4:8). Love is the first fruit from which all the other fruits derives (Gal. 5:22), and these sanctifications are our growth in Christ. We must lead the house of God by love. “Serving others in love is a fundamental discipline of the Christian. Servant hood teaches us to follow the example of Jesus by rejecting ego and self-promotion in favor of humbly seeking to meet the practical needs of others (Herringtons' 164). The faithful and wise servant of Lord is the one who discover love; and he keeps himself from bitterness and seeks forgiveness and reconciliation (Matt. 5:7). Then the fruit is to go to others whom we have offended so as to seek their forgiveness; and terminate conflict.

When we are full of pride, (the opposite of love and humbleness), we can’t manage conflict effectively and we will only spread it out of our pride. So, we need to keep our focus on the base line—on the love of Christ (Eph.3:18-19). True love develops

tolerance in us, which helps us to recognize and accept individual differences. “A tolerant person is master of his own opinions and actions... only by rejecting dogma and accepting contrary views as valid can we hope to get on with each other; that are the gist of the document” (Dickson 65). An open or soft heart can create tolerance in us. That is why scripture commands us to have the heart of Christ. “So, nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility considers others better than your selves (Phi 1:2-3). Therefore, humility is one of the tools of conflict resolution.

In addition, having proper attitudes and motives is one way of managing conflict. Paul says, “Do not repay any one evil for evil... do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom.12:17-21). Also, conflict can be resolved and prevented by prayer and living in God’s word. The key point is; we should have willingness to follow the Biblical pattern (footsteps of Jesus and the Apostles); be in prayer, and operate in the fruits of the spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). By this, we can stop or minimize the increase of hostility in the church.

### **Focusing on the Cross**

Challenges and conflicts in church can be overwhelmed by focusing on the cross. Jesus said, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Luke. 9:23). A leader should remember often the crucifixion of Jesus. As Jesus defeated the enemy on the cross, a servant of the Lord must come to conquer through Jesus. The Bible says, “...we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Rom.8:37). We can't expect victory without love of the cross. Or in



another word, willing to suffer for the sake of gospel. It means that, we must fix our eyes on the suffering of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ.

In his last battle with sin and evil, Jesus showed his strength most authentically. Dying for the truth and for the world's sin, he showed where true greatness lies. Those who have followed his leadership since have known that the leader willing to suffer is the greatest servant of all. Almost every advance in human history has been costly achieved through difficulty and testing that was willingly accepted (Ford 134).

The cost of facing conflict and challenges must be measured in the lenses of our reward from the master. So, a leader has to be loyal, trustworthy, faithful and devoted to Christ as Lord and to His truth. Focusing on the cross is a way of living in sacrifice. Leadership without sacrifice is not true spiritual leadership; we sacrifice because of who we are and who God is, and because of God's sacrifice. A leader that is scarified can lead people to the scarified Christ, and lead people victoriously in conflict situations. Robinson said, "Sacrifice emerges from the subordination of our-self-interest to the mission, to the people who execute the mission, and to the people served by the mission" (109). Understanding the vital secret of the word became flesh would help to resist the challenge, because, sacrifice lies at the heart of God's incarnation. And accordingly, the leader, who scarifies himself for the sake of the bride of the Lord, will live by faith only, focus only on the truth of his Lord, and his mission. He "must fix his eyes on the Lord who is the author and perfecter of our faith" (Heb. 12:2). So that kind of leader can take responsibility in conflicts and focus on Major Jesus' agenda—extension of God's kingdom (church multiplication).

### **Research Design Literature**

In this research, I used mostly quantitative reach method but also explore qualitative in some places especially in selection and discussion of focus group. Tim

sense said, “qualitative research systematically seeks answers to questions by examining various social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings. Qualitative research is grounded in the social world of experience and seeks to make sense of lived experience” (Loc.1628). In the same way, I tried to give attention to sociological, cultural and linguistic origins of the participants, to explore the need for training Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants church leaders in New England and other US cities.

As mentioned above, this dissertation utilized quantitative method because, the study was occupied into intense survey to find out the current growth problems as well as the need for leadership training of immigrant’s church in New England. Creswell said, “A survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (146). I tried to investigate the Habesha immigrant’s church population ratio, growth status, and caught leaders’ attitudes analysis. So, I gathered data and got enough information through interviews, sending questionnaires, and oral or open questions to the participants. Sensing expressed, “Interview allow people to describe their situations and put words to their interior lives, personal feelings, opinions, and experiences that otherwise are not available to the researcher by observation” (Loc.2675). Likewise, using comprehensive interviews and questionnaires’, I tried to obtain Habesha immigrants’ church’s experiences in the given context.

In my ministry project, I used my long years personal experience of training ministers and church leaders in Ethiopia as opening door/search for literature design. Creswell recommendation started, “Use the literature to introduce the study deductively, to describe related literature in a separate section, and to compare with findings in a

quantitative study plan” (24). The past service practices laid foundation for the design of literature and leading the research well. I.e. that fertile ministry experiences had played great role to shape my research.

### **Summary of Literature**

An effective and transformational leader should have a strong sense of purpose that is centered on God. “The key to a successful ministry is trusting that God knows us better than we know for ourselves (Kim 120). Without trusting and fully depending on God, we can’t lead effectively. Not only have confident but a leader has to make others to depend on God. "Transformational leaders create an environment of trust. Trust is often referred to as confidence, reliance, expectation, and hope. Trust involves an element of blind faith" (Lewis 215). Those leaders who demonstrates reliability and consistency on the life of followers can bring substantial transformation in the church. Likewise; the leaders who have a sense of longing and striving toward effectiveness will gain the motivation they need to improve; they will be stimulated to accept more and more responsibilities. This longing will give them the opportunity to make a difference with their lives.

Moreover, the leader should have to express his/her relationship to God through worship and prayer. “Both prayer and worship are deepened as we focus attention not on ourselves or our experiences but on God Himself and see Him in relationship to our experiences. This is one of the great missions of spiritual leaders in the church: to help and to guide the corporate experience of the church so that the whole body responds to Him appropriately” (Hoeldtke 95). Yes, when each and every member of the church become cling to the Lord, they will shine the light of gospel to the world, brings righteous

impact on the world, and won the world by the victorious message of Jesus Christ. That is the base for church multiplication.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT**

#### **The Problem**

Diaspora Ethiopians are scattered all over the world but mostly in North America. Confidently, this could be one part of God's plan to accomplish his Kingdom's extension through evangelism. Tadesse mentions in his book that, "...currently the population of Ethiopian immigrant community in US is estimated about two million" (ix). This indicates a progression of developing new, large Ethiopian communities in the United States. Therefore, the harvest could be vast from the evangelism work in the future for Ethiopian immigrant evangelical churches.

Nevertheless, there are extensive problems among the Ethiopian and Eritreans immigrant churches. The spirit of disagreement dominates communities overall and reflects into the churches; thus, bringing about a negative impact. Language and ethnicity divide some people while homeland political situations or doctrinal schisms divide others. The evangelical churches must prevail over these problems by shining the power and light of the gospel on these situations to change them. Lack of devoted spiritual Christian life means leaders have failed to reveal proper influence in their life settings. Effective biblical leadership is essential for Ethiopian as well as Eritrean immigrant churches in order to create satisfactory solutions to these problems.

#### **Nature and Purpose of the Project**

This chapter presents the overall processes of the project used to address the core problems hindering the growth and multiplication of the Ethiopian immigrant evangelical

churches around the Boston area. This project explores ways to engage those immigrant churches using Christian practices which are influential and transformational.

The purpose of this project was to identify barriers to growth in Habesha (Ethiopian and Eritrean) immigrant churches in greater Boston, Massachusetts in order to establish priorities for training servant leaders for church transformation and growth. The training will be specifically tailored for Ethiopian and Eritrean pastors and lay leaders. In addition, this project will focus on overcoming growth barriers as well as reversing stagnation and decline.

### **Research Questions**

John Creswell said, “Quantitative research questions inquire about the relationships among variables that the investigator seeks to know... These variables can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures” (132). Subsequently, this ministry project used three research questions to evaluate the core problems in growth of immigrant churches in Boston area and to find out the essential training method for leadership development. Some of these churches used pastoral leadership style and others used eldership leadership styles. These styles were culturally implemented stemming from traditions and trends found in the homeland of the leadership.

#### **Research Question #1.**

***What are the leading factors hindering the growth and expansion of Habesha immigrant churches in Boston and New England?***

This question is designed to investigate the root cause for the spiritual disability of the church leaders (including pastors, lay leaders, and ministers) in order to drive us

toward a solution for increased growth/expansion. In order to answer this question, I used a particular instrument, specifically an interview with focus groups, with four different immigrant evangelical churches in Boston, each affiliated with a different denomination. Ideally, the composition of these groups can reflect the needs for leadership training. To answer research question number one, I asked additional questions that seek to determine what kind of training methods and system approaches are useful in the context of immigrant churches in New England. These extra questions are another tool designed as semi-structured interviews for individual leaders. These questions should have similar responses from the leaders and the focus groups but I expect different responses from the participants. The techniques included one-to-one interviews for those participants.

### **Research Question #2.**

*What strategies have the churches and leaders of these churches employed to address those hindrances (barriers) and to develop more effective congregational outreach?*

For the second research question, I also utilized interviews as an instrument with focus groups as well as distributed questionnaires formatted for different local immigrant churches' lay leaders and ministers. The answers would help discover how to prepare effective leaders for a continual ministry through training events in Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant churches. This research question stemmed from the desire to measure the awareness of leaders concerning their weakness and their need to improve effective leadership training.

**Research Question #3.**

*What priorities and emphases are needed in a projected church growth focused training program for leaders in the churches?*

In other words, what are some comprehensive practices for overcoming hindrances to growth and expansion that are suitable for Ethiopian and Eritrean churches in New England? How can best practices for training overcome these hindrances?

This question is designed to determine the essential training element for church leaders, especially for Boston area's Ethiopians and Eritreans immigrant churches. Question number three discovers how the churches can produce the ideal leaders and what type of training would build effective and transformative leaders. Practically speaking, "gaining a basic knowledge of the ministry task at hand is an important starting point for any ministry leadership" (Malphurs & Mancini 153). Therefore, the training components to be explored are based on biblical truth, display conservative evangelical practices, and reflect the cultural context of Ethiopian tradition. I will ask each focus group and interviewee to identify the scope of training already available to the immigrant contextual situations. How can a biblical and evangelical leadership be transmitted to a new generation? To receive sufficient responses to this research question, I asked seven major questions. (Appendix-B).

**Ministry Context(s)**

Normally, the people in the Ethiopian and Eritrean communities are same skin-color and have the same tradition and cultural practices. Historically, both societies have a common name called Abyssinia or Habesha and are known as the Semitic-speaking inhabitants. The common name is an Aramaic word given to the Cushite people living in the



northeast horn of Africa. Formerly both countries were ruled under one government, shared the same seaports, and shared various socio-cultural trends, religion, and language. Those people became scattered all over the world because of persecution, leaving a need for better economic situations as well as better education. They can be found in many large cities of the US in the same proportion as in the population of their home country.

The migration of Habesha people to the US, including New England, began in the late 1960s during the reign of King Haile-Silase. Those immigrants kept their religious heritage, mainly being Coptic Orthodox and Islam (which needed to be evangelized). The immigrant churches use three major ethnic languages (Amharic, Oromo, and Tigrigna) in their services. They also attempt to distribute the gospel message by those native dominant languages. Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant evangelical churches have a good fellowship in Boston. They support each other in various ways which is outside the scope of this project. This research was done within the range of these evangelical churches. Currently, the researcher's local church is planning to reach both communities with their common language, Amharic.

Despite thousands of Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants living in the greater Boston area, many Ethiopians in New England are unreached.

Churches often provide space for people to gather for fellowship. Even for non-Christians, especially for cultural celebrations and on Ethiopian holidays. This is a great opportunity to build relationships and share the Gospel in their own language. A holistic approach of evangelism through social support and relationships has proven most effective for reaching Ethiopians (Duemling 58).

Then the immigrant evangelical churches take this opportunity as best advantage to reach their own home-country peoples. Accordingly, this project aims to develop biblically the

evangelical church leadership and ministers for the growth and for multiplication of the church.

### **Participants**

Participants are intentionally chosen in order to determine the need for leadership training in the immigrant churches. Joseph A. Maxwell says, "Decisions about where to conduct your research and whom to include (what is traditionally called 'sampling') are an essential part of your research methods" (87). Hence, I chose individuals from the present local churches in the greater Boston area. The churches are affiliated with different denominations: Assembly of God, Conservative Baptist church, and Lutheran church. I chose one participant from outside of the Boston area since there are a few emergent immigrant believer fellowships in Worcester, MA, Rhode Island, and Maine. Those fellowships are a humble beginning for planting new churches. Even though these churches had not reached the level of an organized local church, growing church plants is one purpose and target for the ministry of this dissertation.

According to Ethiopian culture, the male is dominant in the household; therefore, only adult male participants were selected for focus groups and individual interviews. For the questionnaires, both adult males and adult females were selected. All participants were from Ethiopian and Eritreans immigrants. The selection criteria were based on the maturity, witness of leadership from friends and church leaders, and those who spoke the same language and had similar norms and cultural backgrounds. In the process of observing their witness, I took into account personal integrity and ethical matters. Therefore, I selected those who had a minimum of 15 years in Christian life and experience in different church ministries. Currently, they were actively ministering

(serving) in local churches. The age of the participants ranges from thirty to fifty-five years old. Most of them were educated at least to a college level.

### **Research Design**

The research method for this ministry project was pre-Intervention. Individual leaders and focus group participants were the principal instruments to discover the need for training among Ethiopian immigrant leadership development and motivation for church multiplication. "The main purpose of the interview is to obtain a special kind of information" (Sensing, Loc.2652. Overall, interview questions and questionnaires were intended to search out the vital features of effective leadership that was contextualized for Ethiopian immigrants' churches in New England. The descriptive method design was used in this project. This method was helpful to gather the necessary information about the core obstacles to the growth and extension of Ethiopian immigrants' churches.

### **Instrumentation**

In my ministry project, the following instrument was used for data collection: an oral interview for focus groups that had seven questions. Sensing says, "Through group interaction, data and insights are generated that are related to a particular theme imposed by a researcher and enriched by the group's interactive discussion" (Loc.2932. The group interaction was a fruitful manner that immigrant churches also use in their bible study/small group to search for the reality of the given subject and gain consensus. The focus group had seven questions. The group discussion was recorded by audio tape recorder and hand notes were taken by the researcher. Secondly, semi-structured interviews with individuals, lay leaders, and pastors consisting of five to seven questions each was held.

The questions were designed to exploit a sufficient response proportionally to the research questions. A note pad, on which to record observations, served as a supplementary tool for this research instrument. Corrine Glesne supposes, “With handwritten notes, interviewees may generally be patient and slow down, even wait for you to catch up if you explain your desire to capture their words as fully as possible” (78). The gestures of the participants, which is necessary in data analysis, were recorded by hand written notes. The third instrument was questionnaires to matured believers and lay ministers currently serving in the above-mentioned immigrants churches.

### **Reliability & Validity of Project Design**

The purpose of this ministry project was to identify barriers to growth in Ethiopian immigrant churches in the greater Boston area in order to set priorities for a projected leader training program. The training will be specifically tailored for Ethiopian and Eritreans pastors and lay leaders. It will focus on overcoming growth barriers and reversing stagnation and decline. Therefore, to overcome the inadequacy of sample investigation and attain a reliable result, I utilized three effective tools: focus group interviews, one-on-one interviews, and questionnaires distributed to twenty ministers, regardless of gender, education, denominations. The questionnaires had twenty-five questions. The interview questions for focus groups and individuals have many similarities.

My spouse recorded the focus group interviews and discussion continually while I took random hand notes for validity. Maxwell says, “Validity in commonsense is a way to the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account” (106). The notes gathered from one-on-one interviews and focus

groups, in addition to the questionnaires, contributed to the reliability and validity of the project. I expanded the range of the participants in interviews and questionnaires to assure the validity of the research. Then, the replication of those interviews in different manners allowed me to identify the need for training within immigrant church leaders. Many years of experience training church leaders and ministers in my home country, coupled with past and current guest speaker opportunities among various Ethiopian immigrant churches in the US as well as current pastoral ministry in my local church, helped me to distinguish the training components needed for church leaders in the greater Boston area. Thus, the research was reliable and valid based on the usage of those sufficient tools.

### **Data Collection**

All of the Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants' churches in Boston contributed to data collection for this ministry project. Sensing says, "Data collection begins with setting the boundaries for the study; it continues by collecting information through observations, interviews, documents, and visual materials, etc." (Loc.2399). Limited boundaries of data collection narrowed the scope of ministry and leadership experiences within each church. Most of these churches had been growing under the leadership of the founding pastors, lay leaders, or a group/eldership leader. Many immigrant churches had been growing through laypersons, leaders, and lay pastors.

Dag Heward-Mills says, "Through laymen, souls will be saved, cells will be established, churches will grow and God's work will flourish. A layman is an ordinary person, a normal person, a commonplace person, a usual person, a regular person, an everyday person, an average person, etc." (1). Great achievements in the church have

been made possible through the input of lay people. Consequently, this research was done mainly with lay ministers since the core focus of this dissertation was aimed to work on transformation of the church that is one hundred percent occupied by lay people. In a friendly way, the researcher asked each participant for his or her volunteer participation in the study. They expressed their positive responses and signed the IRB consent form. The researcher gave a word of assurance about anonymity and notified them of the commitment to share the results of the study upon its completion (see Appendix—F). Data collection occurred in three ways. First, questionnaires were sent by attachment to an email in February 2017 (see Appendix—D). Some of them emailed and others mailed the completed hard copies back to the researcher.

Second, the researcher interviewed ten people (composed of lay church leaders, ministers, and one part-time pastor). They received the interview questions (see Appendix—A) one week ahead of the meeting. Each one of them scheduled an appointment for a convenient time and place. During each interview, communication was in the common native language, Amharic. Responses were recorded in Amharic and later translated by the researcher.

Third, focus group members (six lay leaders from four different local churches and one full time pastor) arrived at a local church office. The date had been scheduled according to each participant's availability. At this meeting, the researcher provided them with a short explanation about the study and encouraged them to freely express their ideas, feelings, and opinions concerning the problem of immigrant church leadership and the church's growth (see Appendix—C). Everyone was expected to give his own observations based upon biblical understanding. The researcher led the

discussion/interview session and his spouse took responsibility for recording. Glesne says, "The tape recorder, however, provides a nearly complete record of what has been said and permits easy attention to the course of the interview" (78). Thus, their responses were recorded continually. Correspondingly, the researcher took hand notes on the interviewee's gestures for the validation of data.

### **Data Analysis**

I utilized a statistical test for data analysis, grounded on John W. Creswell's model. He affirmed, "A final step in the data analysis is to present the results in tables or figures and interpret the results from the statistical test. An interpretation of the results means that the researcher draws conclusions from the results for the research questions, hypotheses, and the larger meaning of the results" (152). Due to the fact that my ministry project is Pre-Intervention, it depended upon semi-structured interviews and the data collected to answer the research questions. It follows that the data gathered through the research instruments (i.e. group interviews, one-on-one interviews, and questionnaires) and was coded for interpretation. Data analysis utilized the following procedure: first, the researcher wrote out translations of the recoded data from Amharic to English. Second, the researcher divided the data into different types of sources based on the response and tone of the participants. Third, the researcher coded the data in text form and modified it into tables. The overall results were analyzed to determine the need for developing immigrant churches, leadership, and ministers for the growth of church.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT**

#### **Overview of the Chapter**

Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant evangelical churches in the US are persisting with various complications. The major root of their complications developed from lack of godly administration or biblical leadership. Church multiplication and the numerical growth of the majority churches depend mostly on the newly arrived believers from their home country. Most of these immigrant churches are not well organized, nor have they planned an effective out-reach ministry. Therefore, identifying these churches as a missional as well as evangelistic is difficult unless they reach non-believers. Subsequently, the ratio of Christian communities as compared to the Habesha immigrant all over the nation is very low, especially in the Boston area.

These immigrant's communities' cultural and traditional leadership has failed to make a positive impact on church leadership. The main purpose of this research was to determine priorities for a projected leader-training program. The training will be specifically tailored for Ethiopian and Eritreans pastors and lay leaders and will focus on overcoming growth barriers as well as reversing stagnation and decline. Furthermore, the short-term training program would be planned to qualify church leaders and ministers for spiritual transformation while renewing their vision for multiplication. Hence, the overall investigation process focused on finding the core problem and solution. Thus, this research explored the training component needed and ways of provision for that training through focus group interviews, one-on-one interviews, and questionnaires.



## Participants

The participants in this research project were chosen from New England's Habesha immigrant churches, especially six local churches in greater Boston. These churches include Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Boston, Boston Emanuel Discipleship Church, Boston Ethiopian Christian Fellowship Church, Boston Eritrean Church, Rehoboth Grace Evangelical Church, and Boston Oromo speaking Church. One Habesha church (Ethiopians & Eritreans) is included: the Evangelical Christian Community Fellowship started in Portland, Maine. The following tables and figures show the demographic descriptions of participants:

Table 4.1 Research Participants by Church:

No.	Name of the Church	Males	Females	Total	% of group
1	Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Boston	5		5	14
2	Boston Ethiopian Christian Fellowship C.	4		4	12
3	Emmanuel Discipleship Church	4		4	12
4	Rehoboth Grace Evangelical Church of Boston	12	5	17	43
5	Boston Eritreans Church	3		3	9
6	Boston Oromo Speaking Church	1		1	3
7	Maine Ethiopian & Eritrean Christian Fellowship	2		2	7
	Total			36	100%

Figure 4.1. Ages of Participants (including the interviewees)

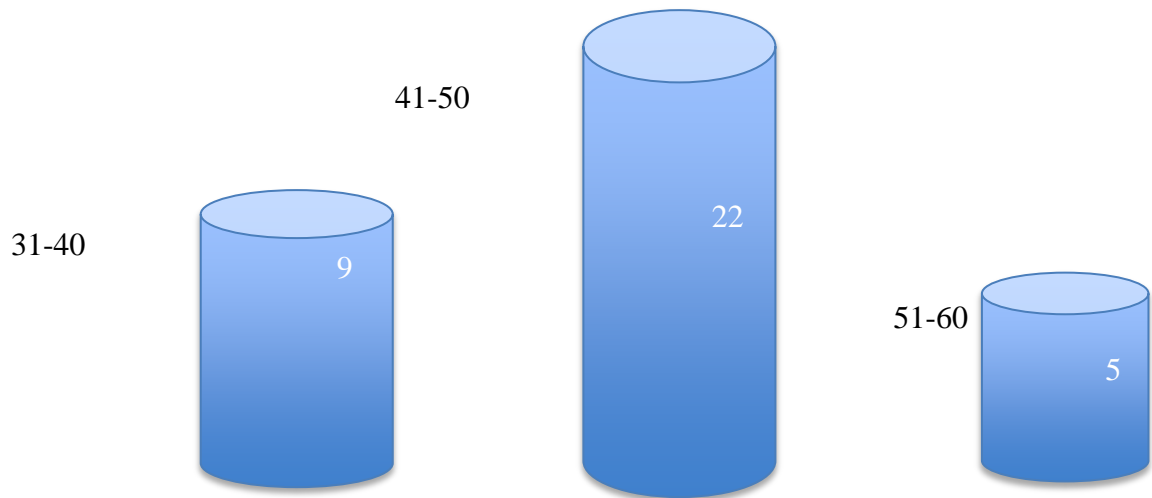


Figure 4.2. Participants Ministry Experiences



Most participants (category D) are those who are serving in different ministries such as prayer group, preaching sermons on Sunday, leading a Bible study, leading a worship team, leading Sunday school classes, leading children's ministry, youth ministry and women's ministry.

The selection criteria for all the research instruments were diverse. First, the participants for the focus group were required to be a mixture of lay leaders and full-time pastors, matured in their life and well fitted in scriptural leadership characteristics (1Tim.3:1-7; Tit.1:5-9). Participants must have served on their specific church leadership board for a minimum of four or more years as well as currently serving in leadership. They should have adequate knowledge of their local church background, culture, and living situations of their own ethnic immigrants. As leaders, they needed the potential to identify the necessity of leadership training for their church's health and growth. Second, for one-on-one interviews and questionnaires, the participants should be: matured in their Christian life, involved in at least one of their local church's ministry, have sufficient knowledge of normal Church activities, and are capable of observing the success and failure of their church's progress.

#### **Research Question #1: Description of Evidence:**

***What are the leading hindrance factors to the Ethiopian & Eritrean immigrant church growth and expansions?***

From the data analysis in Chapter Three, a satisfactory answer for this question emerges when all three investigation methods were utilized. The focus group discussion and the one-to-one interviews (seven questions—Appendix B) have brought about clear findings to the core problem of Habesha's immigrant church growth in Boston area. All

the participants shared possible ideas based on their biblical understanding, experiences, and observations. Therefore, according to their responses, the core hindrances to Boston Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant church growth and multiplications are comprised as follows.

The main reason that nonbelievers are not coming to Christ is the poor examples of Christian life they see in other church members. The traditional and ungodly living of believers makes a negative impact on the ability of members in the church to shine out the light of Christ into the lives of other people. One participant quoted Jesus' teaching in his response: Matt.5:14-16, "You are the light of the world...Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Scriptural living of the child of God attracts people to the light of Christ. The carnal or worldly living of the believers is an obstacle to unbelievers for coming to church. The church leaders and ministers are experiencing the deficiency of such a type of spiritual element and model. The lack of mutual love leads to disagreement, contradiction, and conflict. Therefore, nonbelievers observe the inward conflict and division as additional obstacles against-the attraction of nonbelievers.

The focus group participants said that the key reason why the church does not multiply or increase in number is mainly because they have no outreach vision. Church members have no culture of witnessing, living a priesthood life, or as born-again Christian. The leaders are not encouraging or motivating members for outreach (to reach their families, friends, neighbors, etc.). The churches are not experiencing the baptism of the Holy Spirit and Charismatic Movement, which so empowered the life of the early church. People do not view the Holy Spirit as working boldly in the modern church. One

of the focus group participants articulated, “Many church leaders have problems in accepting the charismatic experience that makes the church grow in number. People come to Christ when they get healings, see the miracles and tangible moving of God’s hand (manifestation of gospel power).” Most of interviewees also responded that the multiplication and growth of the church is based on the movement of spiritual awakening as well as discipleship making.

The major reason for new believers not staying in the church is the lack of follow-up. All interviewees agreed that church leaders are not giving attention to nurturing or teaching new believers continuously. Therefore, one interviewee said, “currently the ministry of making disciples is weak in all immigrant local churches.” The response from this person indicates the urgent need to organize short-term training for church leaders.

The inadequate living situation (deprived economy) of the immigrant people also has a negative impact on the endurance of new believers in the church. A majority of participants said, “All Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants in the US are struggling with double jobs (involving extra work) to overcome their economic need to help their families. Moreover, they are expected to send money to their close relatives back in their home country, where relatives are depending on them. Because of these busy lives, people are not staying in the church.” That is one of the major factors contributing to the stagnant of immigrant church in city.

The poor ethical life of Christians was another obstacle for the salvation of new souls. One of the lady interviewees spoke ironically on this issue, “When believers misbehave, cheating, participating in gossip, acting in worldly things, etc. in their work

place, people don't come to Christ." She was evangelizing or witnessing many times to Habesha immigrants in the City of Boston. She disclosed her experiences based on feedback responses from the field. One of my interviewees, a matured man, expounded on how the ethical life of saints can be an obstacle for skeptics, especially on the issues of divorce, drunkenness, and the acts of the flesh. He expressed his understanding thus, "this character developed from weak discipleship. The leaders were not guide and help their members grow or be rooted deeply in scriptural norms." Another church leader interviewee supplemented the understanding, "Lack of sanctification in Christian living is the core obstacle for nonbelievers to accept Christ, because our immigrant community lives together and observes our lives." Christians must live blameless life in to shine the light of gospel in their own community.

Other participants mentioned another side of hindrance factors. First, the means of communication played a vital role in communicating the gospel message to the unreached. Due to our busy lives, advanced technology, and emphasis on individualism, people do not give ear to hear us. Electronic devices, such as phones, isolate people from communal life. Speaking to a person you do not know is becoming strange today. The current system narrows the strategy for outreach or witnessing the gospel; such activities may need permission from an authorized office. The church has the authority from Lord to go to the world to preach gospel.

Some of the participants stressed how the social system and technology impact the expansion of the gospel. Other issues which impact preaching the gospel are the corruption of society because of homosexuality, transgender ideas, and other evils. All of these generate a negative impact on church multiplication and growth. Hence,

participants added, “Currently new generations are being polluted in public schools, colleges, etc. The parents’ rights concerning their own children are limited by government law as well as the post-modern social system’s failure to rebuke or correct children so they will grow in godly ways.” This issue makes scary most of the immigrants. Because they are afraid of deportation in case they are exposed out while correcting their children,

Most of the participants mentioned the disagreement or the division of church leaders as contributing to the barriers facing the growth of Habesha immigrant churches in Boston. They stated, “Disunity is the indication of misconception or misunderstanding of the Kingdom of God concept. If there is no unity or fellowship among brothers, the light of the gospel can be hindered and present obstacles for the salvation of unbelievers.” The outside people are criticizing Christians on this matter. There is no boldness in believers to evangelize the world (i.e., to go outside to witness to the gospel). Consequently, disunity creates an obstacle to the growth of immigrant churches.

## **Research Question #2: Description of Evidence**

*What strategies for church growth have leaders of the Ethiopian and Eritreans immigrant churches and their leaders in greater Boston employed thus far, and why have they lacked success?*

Regarding this question, most participants’ responses were pessimistic about my interviews (Appendix B). The churches are not trying to project new strategies to overcome those hindrances. More than half of the participants said that the majority of immigrant church congregations have no idea about their personal responsibility to

witness the gospel. This indicates that no continual awareness is given to members; thus, believers became careless about the fulfillment of their priesthood tasks.

One participant mentioned the weak trend that most Habesha churches adapted: forming small groups called ‘witness groups’ as one part of the ministry department within the local church. These groups comprise of three to ten people depending on the numbers/numerical proportions of the local church. These groups aimed to reach lost people with gospel. This core group was supposed to go on outreach activities once a week or once a month to preach gospel on the street, distribute flyers, and speak to any person on the road. It has been shown that all evangelical churches practicing such kinds of ministry do such mission activities back in the home country as well as here in US. One participant said, “This ministry was not effective to do missions because witnessing the gospel is not given for special, limited people but is the responsibility of all born-again Christians.” She quoted Acts 8:4: “Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.” Every member must go for outreach.

Many churches have forgotten the Great Commission of the Lord. The issues voiced in this study rotated around one core issue; “Their church leaders are not giving attention to the expansion of gospel.” They are not speaking an inspirational word to the congregation every week during Sunday worship sermons. Almost all the responses of the interviewees, focus group, and questionnaires hammered at this truth. They mentioned there is no continual discipleship teaching in most immigrant churches. Evangelism ministry happens two to three times in a year, occasionally coinciding with annual conferences. There is also a problem with members; many people in the church do



not want to learn the foundational doctrine taught in the word of God. They are not spiritually thirsty and hungry.

Numerous participants reported that, the leaders do not give anyone else a chance to contribute developing ideas, comments, and/or criticisms about the local churches. There is no freedom to evaluate the weaknesses and strengths of the church's progress. The cultural background of Habesha's people has a negative impact on church leadership which spreads a spirit of dictatorship. This dictatorial attitude seems to rule over the folks of God. Another participant mentioned, "our current leaders have to have changed minds that are ready to accept new flowing ideas or thoughts that the Holy Spirit brings." They should have updated themselves to the ongoing changing situation of new generation as well as world.

Some participants suggest that the core problem is lack of zeal for the kingdom of God. Believers are occupied by their own fleshly desires with worldly things and they forget the main goal of living on this world. There is no self-awakening and willingness to submit to the work of God. The busy life, as well as the complicated system of laws in this nation, have shaped many ministers so they do not have time to serve God. A considerable number of interviewees indicated that, "everywhere there is a lukewarm spirituality and lack of dedicated leaders." The leaders must be open to facilitate discussion forums for their members in different levels of church ministries. The invitation and incorporation of church ministers to timely evaluation can open the leader's eyes so they can see their vacancies modify their programs.

**Research Question #3: Description of Evidence:**

*Given the hindrances to church growth in Ethiopian & Eritrean immigrant churches in greater Boston, and the lack of success of leaders' corrective strategies to date, what emphases are needed in a projected church growth focused training program for leaders in the churches?*

Six questions are designed for the interviews and focus group. These questions aim to discover the means of delivery for the leadership training as well as access the solution to the focal purpose of the project. The overall questionnaires' general views were also aimed at strengthening and developing the purpose of the project. Most of the participants' responses indicate no seasonal teaching is provided for the congregation. The sermons are not relevant to the life and contextual situation of the congregation. Additionally, there was a problem concerning the foundation of church planting. Many local churches were not planted on foundations established by either the consensus of the leading members of a founding church or their missional motives. One participant, who had lived many years in the research area and was well experienced in Habesha immigrant church ministry, said, "Since the church does not give strong scriptural teaching on related issues, people are diving into bad moral or ethical problems." Lack of maturity in understanding sound doctrine of the word of God may leads people to worldliness life.

Others pointed out the lack of discipleship everywhere. No relevant training is provided for church ministers. The foundational teachings on the topics of church missions, calling, and holiness are important for believers to overcome those hindrances. Some of them emphasized the lack of biblical character, especially the lack of a strong

sense of love and unity within their local church. One participant, who was in a church leadership position, said, “There is no mutual loving and respecting one another between the church ministers. Occasionally some part time elders see the pastors as their servant and home-maid which is not good.” Such insight derives from an immature spiritual life. All of participants mentioned that lack of proportional growth in Christian life is an obstacle. Each believer must be nurtured well to grow to maturity. One focus group respondents said, “Believers must be equipped toward maturity according to Ephesians 4:11-16. Unfortunately, we are not privileged.” Moreover, the church ministers and leaders are not in line with the biblical standard.

All participants agree on the need for training church leaders and different types of local church ministers. The problem is no culture of learning from one another exists in these churches. A brother said, “The leaders are not trying to recognize the gifts of one another. There is a spirit of jealousy between evangelical churches. The older or former church leaders do not want to sit down with their new brothers, since they are blinded by the pride of seniority.” An unhealthy culture exists where Habesha’s immigrant church people expect the church to be the community center where people come together for a social purpose. He said, “That attitude is the weakness and sign of being spiritually lukewarm.” The saints of God should have to live the life that brings positive impact in their society.

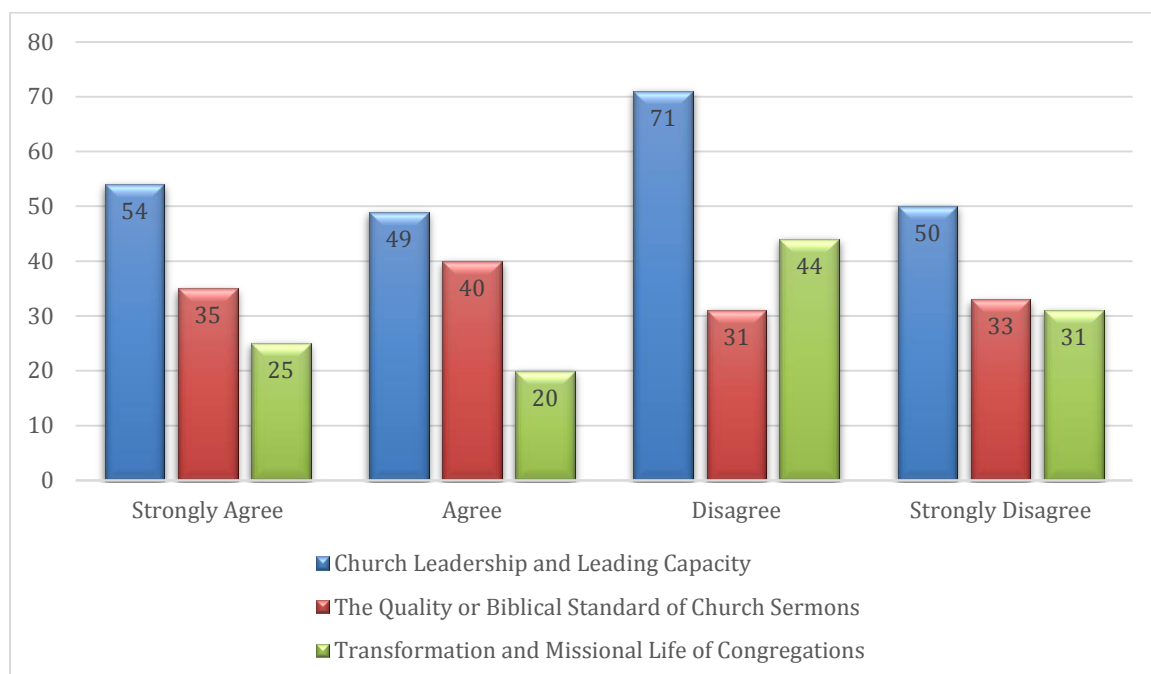
Most of the participants proposed that training about unity or fellowship of immigrant evangelical church leaders should be given at the local church level. The convenient time, place, and contextual situation of the people must be taken into consideration. Many immigrants are struggling with economic problems in an attempt to

overcome the costly living circumstances of surviving in the US. Thus, church activities must give attention to those scenarios in their planning. From the response of focus groups and interviewees, the convenient time to train people is during the fall and spring seasons. During the summer, people are moving from place to place for vacation and traveling to their home country. During summer, attendance will decrease during church. One of the leaders added, “Many local immigrant churches do not have a budget for training, consequently, there is spiritual depression in the church.” Hence, greater effort is needed to develop a culture of training with an appetite and hunger for learning the factors involved in growth for the Habesha immigrant churches.

### **Summary of Survey Questionnaires**

The survey questionnaires were designed to support data collection and strengthen the accuracy over all three research questions. The questionnaires will evaluate the healthy immigrant churches through the lens of scripture. Most of the participants who had fertile experiences in church leadership told me that, “the questionnaires were like a ringing bell. It awakens us to see our weakness and strength.” Their oral response and feedback stirred me to move ahead successfully on the work of this project. The answers to the twenty-five questionnaires can be divided into three categories:

Figure 4.3 Survey Questionnaires—Data Category



### Summary of Major Findings

For the accuracy of the research, I initiated many interactions with immigrant church leaders outside of the above three methods of data collection. My advisor arranged for the opportunity to travel to three places in the US in September 2017. We visited five immigrant churches in Silver Spring, Maryland; Alexandria, Virginia; Raleigh, North Carolina and Charlotte, North Carolina. I talked with church leaders about their church history and their progress (including their mission activity and leadership development). I asked open questions that related to my research questions and purpose statement (Appendix G). The feedback and discussion contributed highly to the development of this project.

The facial interactions and joyful responses of the focus group and interview participants motivated me toward my vision. The questionnaires, interviews, and

discussions engaged as many leaders as possible concerning the necessity of training immigrant church leaders for the transformation of the church. The resulting data from this research is summarized as follows:

1. Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant congregations are not spiritually well prepared for lives of discipleship and Christian witness.
2. Most Sunday sermons are not focused on helping Christians realize the meaning of the priesthood of all believers and their obligation to witness.
3. Leadership training programs for immigrant leaders are much needed and likely to be transformational for congregations.
4. Greater unity and fellowship among Habesha immigrant evangelical churches is needed.
5. Better communication and more transparency is needed between the leaders and lay members of Habesha immigrant evangelical churches.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT**

#### **Overview of the Chapter**

The key deriving force for this research was the sluggish growing phases of the Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant churches in New England. This problem arose from a spiritually inadequate leadership style. Leadership is decisive in any organizations whether in secular organizations or in the house of God. God does not forsake his people without leaders through all times and seasons. That is why Jesus assigned Peter to take care of his sheep at the time of his ascension (Jn. 21:15-17).

The purpose of this project was to find solutions for minimizing the immigrant church leadership problems by equipping leaders and other church ministers. This equipping can mobilize immigrant churches to reach other immigrants as well as native peoples. Overall, the research process was designed to enhance short-term training programs for the development and/or transformation of the churches. This can have a great impact on the kingdom. Therefore; this study presents five findings which will be discussed in this chapter.

#### **Major Findings**

##### **First Finding**

Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant congregations are not spiritually well prepared for lives of discipleship and Christian witness.

The majority of our country's evangelical Christian background came from Coptic orthodox where every single adherent member depends upon the priest's liturgical ceremony for spiritual life. This old traditional religious background has left negative

influences upon the Habesha community. My observation before and during research remained the same. Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant congregations are not spiritually inclined to practice or teach the true discipleship of Christ. Therefore, church growth was hindered. All Habesha's immigrant Christians—depend upon their leaders alone for their spiritual life's sustainability. My research participants addressed the childish life and immaturity of the congregation as a problem. Each believer expects someone who can pray powerfully for his/her problems and needs. They look to a special person who can comfort and counsel them in their life journey. This indicates they are not grounded on the cornerstone of Christ for their continued growth. After research, I observed three things: first, people are staying in the local church only for the sake of social values like marital and family relationships; second, people are going to church only from fear of hell or death not because of God's love; third, the immigrant churches are not disciplined well.

Healthier church life rests on discipleship making. Literature fully supports the findings of this research. Ogden mentioned the core truth as follows; "Discipling is an intentional relationship in which we walk alongside other disciples in order to encourage, equip and challenge one another in love to grow toward maturity in Christ. This includes equipping the disciples to teach others as well" (17). The disciples of Christ are identified mainly by their intuitive love for one another and submission to live Christ-like lives. This research finds that immigrant church congregations are not nurtured seriously for growth to be true disciples of Jesus.

Church growth comes from the submissive and transforming life of the congregation. The research participants affirmed during the interviews that the Habesha



evangelical congregational life has no culture or practice of submission. "Godly submission is rooted in God's good and loving intentions for each one of us...Submission is a way we allow God's kingdom agenda to shape our choices, relationships and vocations. And it always works in conjunction with our personal freedom" (Calhoun 119). The disciple should have voluntarily united his/her will and freedom to the Master's will. That type of submission leads to growth. The central message of God's kingdom agenda is salvation of the soul. Thus, there must be submitted witnessing agents for this agenda of discipleship. "To witness means modeling and telling of the difference Jesus has made in one's life" (Calhoun 159). Witnessing should bring to light the life-changing love of Jesus for others which they obtain from being submitted to that life.

The church is here on the earth to fulfill the great commission of the Lord. Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."(Matt.28:19-20). One aspect of this command is making disciples. Research revealed that Habesha immigrant churches, especially those in New England, were not developing their congregations toward discipleship. Growing disciples requires great effort from church leaders. Paul says, "For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deal with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory" (1Thess.2:11-12). Here, we learn from Paul's experiences that making disciples requires not only teaching but hard work in the life of individual followers. The triad directions of ministry (encouraging, comforting, and urging) are important for disciples to live lives worthy of God. To deal with each one of our members requires sacrifice of time, power, and life style just as the apostles sacrificed. Disciple-makers, or church leaders, should have the spirit of fatherhood toward their

members. That kind of heart and intention is what Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant church leaders lack.

Discipleship is a matter of living worthy of God, imitating the Master's life. This type of living produces fruit. Paul exhaustively ministered to Thessalonians, and then he reaped the result, or fruit, of his labor. Previously, he encouraged them by saying, "We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ...You became imitators of us and of the Lord...you became a model to all the believers..."

(1Th.1:3,6,7). Thus, the disciples have to live a life worthy of their calling by practicing these three basic major truths of character in the New Testament: faith, love and hope.

A disciple practicing faith attempts to live a lifestyle that responds according to the command of Jesus (Matt.7:26; Jn.14:20-21; 15:7; Ja.1:22; 2:14-26). A disciple practicing love requires a true love that denies the self and lives for others. When disciples exercise divine love, the church is edified, clearing the way for the work of the Holy Spirit, and attracting the world to the church. Such love extends the Kingdom of God (Jn.13:34-35; 15:12; 1Co.13). A disciple practicing hope brings endurance and inspires a life that ministers to the Lord's people and is waiting for His revelation, enduring in the blessed hope (Ro.8:25; Tim.2:13). The findings of this project directly and fully relate to the biblical and theological framework.

## **Second Finding**

Most Sunday sermons are not focused on helping Christians realize the meaning of the priesthood of all believers and their obligation to witness.

This project is the result of the observation of various sermons delivered in different Ethiopian immigrant churches in Boston for three years. In the majority of the churches, lay leaders are assigned to preach on different topics every Sunday. Most of the time, the sermons are focused on material blessings not on salvation. During the research process, the feedback of the participants indicates that the majority of immigrant church sermons do not concentrate on out-reach messages or on encouraging the congregation for evangelism. The majority of sermons preached did not emphasize the motivation of congregations for witnessing. While it is acknowledged that sermons alone do not help people to recognize the priesthood of believers, they can play a great role in the process. Hence, creating basic awareness of the concept of priesthood as well as missional life for each Habesha immigrant believer became very significant. Data collection revealed that the Habesha immigrant congregations have no awareness of the life of the priesthood which is the core responsibility and calling of the New Testament believer.

The literature in this project fully supports the findings of the research on Habesha immigrant churches in Boston. Interviews and survey questionnaires demonstrate that immigrants are attending churches basically once a week on Sunday only. The leaders have to use this unique day to mold their people to be a missional community. Congregations can be led to live the gospel practically and incarnational. Our people must understand the ways of witnessing to their community. Hiebert asserted, "Incarnational witness goes where people are, speaks their language and becomes one with them as far as we are psychologically able, and our consciences allow. People need to hear the gospel in their heart language and see it lived out by us" (66). Incarnational ministry within Habesha community would be convenient for us. Witnessing the gospel

for Habesha immigrants in the US should be easy because their native, nonbelieving community that shares the same language and culture already surrounds them. Still, this congregation needs to be aware of the task of the priesthood and needs to understand how to deliver the message of the gospel outside of their comfort zone. The concept of living a missional life or sharing the gospel must be injected into the inner life of the people of God. That is the way the church can multiply itself.

The biblical and theological framework of this research directly coincides with this finding. Paul said, "...but we preach Christ crucified..." (1Cor.1:23). The message of the cross is powerful. On the other hand, the absence of sound teaching and preaching is the reason why our immigrant faith communities do not overcome the systems of this world. Preaching that focuses on human needs, that pleases only the flesh and offers only material blessings, does not help the faith communities on their long journey in Christian life. If people are nurtured with the powerful message of the gospel, the crucifixion, and resurrection power of Christ, they become transformational. "For the message of the cross is...the power of God" (1Co.1:18). This study reveals that when no substantial sermons are being preached among Habesha's immigrant churches, the outcome is the stunted growth of the churches.

Paul urges Timothy to "Preach the word..."(2Ti.4:2). The pure word of God has power to transform people, challenging anyone who opens his/her heart to hear and obey, calling them into practical action. "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow..." (Heb.4:12). Every sermon should have persuasive power. The research findings indicate that the persuasive preaching is very useful for Habesha immigrant

congregations. Such preaching has an apologetic task intended to bring people to the point of decision, the decision to serve Christ and to proclaim his good news to the world and to live a life of priesthood. The apostle Peter also encourages the chosen people to live for one purpose. "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1Pet.2:9). Healthy congregations are declaring the gospel continually. Church leaders have a responsibility to bring their congregation to this level.

### **Third Finding**

Leadership training programs for immigrant leaders are much needed and likely to be transformational for congregations.

Prior to this research, leadership training for contemporary immigrant churches was abstracted for two reasons: first, conducting training for leaders seemed as easy as the training experiences back in Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, different church leaders were soon ready for training because they were eager to learn and grow spiritually. Here in US, things are different. People have no time for the training since they are heavily involved in worldly matters rather than thinking about the house of God. Second, expectations are high for a good standard of spiritual maturity for leaders. However, during the process of research, the spiritual maturity level of immigrant church leaders fell short of biblical principles that had been experienced in the past.

The literature review of this project is directly related to and supports the findings. The research groups emphasized that most New England Ethiopian immigrant church leaders come to leadership positions based on circumstances other than scriptural

requirements. Some of them come to their position simply to fill a gap in leadership. Some of them come by chance; some of them come by virtue of their long-standing membership in the church and others through their close relative relationships (friends) within the church. Thus, the church needs to develop the spiritual capacity of current leaders for church multiplication. Therefore, conducting short-term training programs for ministers and lay leaders would be important, because training leaders will be the foundation for transforming each local church.

The main purpose of this project is to offer biblically-based training for immigrant church leaders that shapes the trainee to be servant leaders. Leadership training for pastors without requiring formal seminary training is much needed. Berkley supposed, "Servant leaders enables others to develop their spiritual gifts in the context of ministry, and they publicly recognize the growth and contribution of others" (Berkley 18). Servant leaders do not monopolize the ministry and leadership, but they share with followers. The core problem in Habesha immigrant church leaders is the lack of this fertile concept. Leaders should gain the broad understanding of the Kingdom of God through training. "Training is motivational. People who invest their time and effort acquiring training want to use that training in the field.... Equipping those who are actually doing the work of ministry is one of the most strategic things pastors and top leaders can do with their time" (McCallum and Lowery Loc.4312). Short-term training creates opportunities for a constant stream of ideas from upper levels of leadership as well as from more experienced leadership.

The Biblical and Theological framework in this project has been used as a vehicle to carry out these findings. Training leaders is vital work in the house of God as shown in

both the Old and New Testament. The advice of Jethro in Exodus 18 indicates that Moses should train other men to prepare for leading ministry. A leader's spiritual character and gifts for leadership as mentioned in v.21 need to be included in training. Moreover, Moses had trained Joshua and Caleb in a special way. Jesus trained twelve disciples for three and a half years (Matthew.10; Mark 3; Luke 10). Paul trained Timothy, Titus, and many others (Acts 20). Overall, feedback from this research highlighted the necessity of training. Lack of trained church leaders challenges the fulfillment of the Great Commission. Short-term training is not only for church leaders but must be planned for all local church ministers. Ministers include those who serve as deacons, Sunday school teachers, preachers and others who serve in different parts of the church. From the experiences of Habesha's immigrant contexts, a majority of church leaders come out of these ministers. Accordingly, the focus groups and interviewed participants underlined that biblical-based leadership training for Habesha immigrant church leaders and ministers creates motivation and can transform the local churches.

#### **Fourth Finding**

Greater unity and fellowship among Habesha immigrant evangelical churches is needed.

Prior to this research, almost all Ethiopian immigrant churches did not want to have fellowship with each other except for the Eritrean church. The project participants who are currently serving on the eldership board from Boston Eritrean church informed the researcher that they have good relationships outside of Boston with other Eritrean churches in different states. Subsequently, they have an interest in fellowship here in Boston with their Ethiopian church brothers. Unity or fellowship among Habesha immigrant evangelical churches is essential to enhance the culture of learning and

benefiting from one another's grace. This research did reveal a spirit of jealousy and an immature understanding of the concept of God's Kingdom which became an obstacle for the formation of fellowship.

From the evangelical church fellowship's experiences back in their home country, the establishment of Habesha immigrant evangelical church fellowship in the Boston area context is important for the following reasons: (1) Most of the Habesha believers' background is from Coptic orthodox and Islam. Culturally, the expectation is high for those from traditional religious communities to create an evangelical mutual relationship. Lack of unity among evangelicals would have negative implications for the mission field society in New England. This lack of evangelical unity can be a stumbling block for new converts, especially for those who want to leave their traditional religion and join evangelicals. All participants during the research extensively discussed this problem. (2) The leaders and other ministers can share ministry experiences with one another in order to grow and learn. Topics could include things such as out-reach methods, intercessory prayer, worship style, pastoral care, conflict resolution methods, etc. (3) Fellowship is also good to grow believers spiritually in appropriate ways. Sometimes, a believer, when rebuked and disciplined by church leaders for his/her misbehavior or wrong-doing, spontaneously changes their church affiliation. Such Christians move around from church to church and lead their lives without true conversion. Christians must be corrected according to biblical principles to be blameless before God (2Tim.4:2). If there is a strong fellowship of evangelical churches, these believers subject themselves to longer stays in their mother church for correction.



The fourth reason why evangelical fellowship is important is to facilitate training situations. As mentioned previously in chapter four, the participants articulated the main importance of coming together is in order to receive training which is the major purpose and plan of this project. Scripturally, no one loses when they are in unity. David said, "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity...For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore" (Ps.133:1-3). Local churches can keep their diversity even in unity. Within unity, there exists diversity of leadership style, administration type, mission strategies, and visions among the local church fellowships.

When churches develop the trend of working together, they glorify God. The church of God as one body in Christ can be edified if they coordinate their work, especially in equipping servant leadership. The bible says, "The mystery of the seven stars...is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches" (Rev.1:20). John saw all the churches leaders, whether weak or strong, in the hands of the risen Lord. Therefore, the unity or fellowship of churches pleases the maker and head of the church, Jesus Christ. In a practical world, training leaders at a single local church level may not be fruitful as the number of leaders is few in each church. The research participants addressed this topic by reasoning out issues of time, places, finances, etc.

From the researcher's past homeland practices, people learn best when they come together from different churches and denominations. The current charismatic movement in Ethiopia especially creates an opportunity of strengthening the fellowship of evangelicals. The spiritual movement in the home country has a positive impact on scattered individual immigrant believers' lives all over the world, including the US.

Many ministers from Ethiopia have been invited to serve on miscellaneous occasions like evangelistic and revival conferences for Habesha immigrant churches in this nation. Some of them spoke powerfully on the necessity of fellowship and challenged leaders, being themselves empowered by the Holy Spirit.

This researcher understands there is currently a strong fellowship of North American Evangelistic Church Fellowships. However, the fellowship is not well organized down to the level of different cities of the US except for a few places. The advantage of fellowship is not only for training leaders, but different church ministers can be equipped together. For example, the singers or choirs, youth leaders, music players, and other ministry leaders within the local churches can be trained together. Through this way, a church with limited financial means and few members can benefit as well as encourage. Church fellowship is very important for the purpose of this project which focuses on short-term training program for New England's Habesha immigrant church leaders in order to cause transformation and multiplication of the church.

### **Fifth Finding**

Better communication and more transparency is needed between the leaders and lay members of Habesha immigrant evangelical churches.

Prior to this research, intimacy between church's leaders and their congregations had to be observed from a distance. The size of the immigrant' churches ranges from the Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Boston, which has more than 170 members, to the rest of the churches ranging from twenty-five to eighty people. During the research process, people have been observed going to the church out of fear of isolation from social relationships and attending Sunday worship out of fear of backsliding. This indicates that

the culture of evaluation and transparency between leaders and congregation is not developed in most Habesha immigrant communities. After this research, the observation coincides with one of the leadership problems: the gap between leaders and followers.

The literature review supported the findings on the need for transparency in leadership character. Self-evaluation and ministry evaluation create motivation and transformation. Any lack of clarity in the leadership process resulted in division and splitting within the immigrant church. On the other hand, people follow the openness of servant leaders. "The way we lead people is the way people will follow. The group will do as we do, not as we say" (Boren 85). When leaders subject themselves to evaluation, then the followers are also ready to be evaluated. In most cases, leaders prevented themselves from being evaluated for fear of criticism. Gibbs said, "In any context criticism is an inevitable price of leadership" (184). Obviously, leaders are the most visible targets in any ministries of the church. Adopting the culture of positive criticism will lead to overcoming the barriers of growth. Jesus led his disciples in a way that helps leaders to clearly understand their journey, their path, and their purpose. "The way of Jesus is always collaborative, always participatory. The way of Jesus is corrected by the entire group in the spirit, not by the leaders on his/her own" (Boren 85). People participate fully in ministry where the leadership style is collaborative and allows for participant input..

The biblical framework of this project surrounding the culture of evaluation and transparency of Habesha's immigrant church leaders can be examined through the lenses of model leaders within the Old Testament and the New Testament. The first unique person was Samuel. He said, "Here I stand. Testify against me in the presence of the Lord

and his anointed...If I have done any of these things, I will make it right" (1Sa.12:3).

Samuel submitted himself to public evaluation of his past faithfulness in ministry. He invited the elders and leaders of the people to judge whether or not he used his position for personal gain as well as whether he led the people according to the law. Samuel's leadership style should be applied to all servant leaders of the church. Church leaders must present themselves to their congregations for evaluation in the mirror of scripture.

The second model leader presenting himself clearly is Paul. "Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible" (1Co.9:19). Paul deprived himself as a servant and curtailed his personal privileges for the benefit of others. He used this way to win people and bring them to Christ. This self-submission and clarity in leadership of Habesha immigrant church is important for multiplication of the church.

Our chief leader, Jesus Christ, has established the theological framework for the concept of transparency in this project when he taught about the bread of life. "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never thirst...This is the bread that came down from heaven...whoever feeds on this bread will live forever" (Jn.6:35-58). Many of his disciples were not accepting of this teaching. Hence, Jesus stated more clearly, "The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the spirit and life" (v.63). Jesus clarified his teaching and then he asked them transparently for their decision to follow him willingly. They replied, "...Lord, to whom shall we go?" (v.69). Clarity and transparency in leadership enhances the growth of the church. After transparency comes intimacy. If there is ministry transparency, financial usage transparency, and vision

transparency from the church leaders, the congregation follows them willingly. They submit themselves to their leadership and the church transforms and flourishes .

Therefore, Habesha church leaders must develop the trend of self-evaluation with panel discussions on the key issues of the church's agenda and on the vision of the pastor. Effective communication develops between leaders and congregation; thus, creating trustworthiness among them. The congregation must believe their leaders. Such spirit in the church clears a way for the hand of God to move.

### **Ministry Implications for the Findings**

This research was directed towards reviewing the challenging issues for the growth of New England Habesha's immigrant churches. These issues sprouted from a leadership problem. As a consequence, the study project has been focused on the needs assessment for training church leaders. Principally, training church leaders for the multiplication of church is the vision originally given to me with the growth of my ministry. The idea of equipping ministers and leaders was conceived twenty years earlier in the womb of my extended mission work and church planting. After my arrival in the US, that vision matured and gave birth to this project.

Using the essentials truths of this dissertation to teach and equip ministers/leaders will benefit the Boston Habesha immigrant church leaders. The teaching of this material impacts revival and motivation as well as shapes the life of current immigrant church ministers. Accordingly, the local churches need to improve their evangelizing and multiplication. Particularly, this research is useful in the following ways:

1. Translating the research into Amharic will be the primary work since it is the common language for all Habesha immigrants. Translating the research into

other vernacular languages will follow as the need arises. Consequently, this research will serve as training material or a working document.

2. The training programs will be conducted on different levels: the local church level and organizing city-wide level for Habesha immigrant churches. This can be done in one centralized location by agreement of evangelical church leaders. Prior to that, contact and discussion with church leaders will be required. The outcome of the training will be evaluated through oral communication with local church leaders as well as by the ministry fruits of the trainee.
3. Financial resources for training programs would be generated from willing contributions of the different churches that receive advantages from training as well as from trainees. Other fund-raising means and strategies will be anticipated.
4. The scope of this research is extensive. The vision is to serve not only New England but to also train and motivate different denominations of evangelical churches in Ethiopia including Habesha's immigrant churches of US, African countries, Europe, Canada, Australia, as well as some middle eastern and Asian immigrants.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study was limited to the New England area, mainly greater Boston, with special focus on Habesha immigrant evangelical churches only. It does not include other churches in the US where majority Habesha immigrant populations live. This project focuses first on identifying Habesha's immigrant evangelical church's leadership

problems for the growth of the church and focuses next on identifying the needs of leadership training. Therefore, the research area should extend to include other US states and their Habesha immigrant evangelical churches. Compared to the broad US Habesha immigrant population, this study was narrowed within one or two states. Therefore, the findings may not entirely represent leadership training needs of all American Habesha immigrant evangelical churches. However, the difficulty will be getting research participants face-to-face. Interviews will require cell phone technology, teleconferences, or skypeing from a distance. That would strengthen the research.

The second limitation occurs in the data collection process: the number of women participants was not adequate. Different cultural taboos of Habesha's community contributed to insufficient numbers of spiritually matured women from churches other than my local church. Originally, around seven to nine women were expected to participate in focus groups and one-on-one interviews for data collection. Therefore, the research findings may not exhaustively answer why godly women do not fully participate in both Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant churches leadership boards in greater Boston. The culture of superiority of men over women in Habesha society has an impact on the formation and development of servant leadership as well as church multiplication.

Third, the findings of this research project do not include Coptic Orthodox Churches and Roman Catholic Churches as these denominations are comprised of majority people of Ethiopian and Eritreans everywhere. In addition, because of traditionalism, those churches are using as harvest field for evangelicals.

Furthermore, this research covers only the elements of effective leadership components for transformation and multiplication of the church in details. Time and

resource constraints at this level coincided with the researchers own church ministry.

Also, some of the leaders of Habesha local evangelical immigrant churches did not give reasons why they were not willing to participate fully in the study.

### **Unexpected Observations**

One of the unexpected observations was the need for fellowship among different evangelical churches in Boston. The focus group discussion was the ice-breaker meeting for both Habesha countries' (Ethiopians and Eritreans) church leaders. It was the first opportunity to sit together for Ethiopian immigrant church leaders in the city. I discovered that the work of God's enemies causes division and hatred among the children of God. Still, there is a hunger and a thirst to meet together in the hearts of the saints. Paul said, "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Ga.3:26-27). Born-again children of God are one in Christ, but church politics and lack of a Kingdom mind-set creates the gap. In all our focus groups, we sensed the presence of Holy Spirit. We confirmed this by ending our discussion with praying, singing, and praising our Lord together. We also spent a lot of unexpected time together. Praise the Lord.

Second, a majority of immigrants lose their spiritual commitment when they arrive in the US. Many immigrant Christians do not actively participate in church ministry not only from lack of scriptural knowledge, but they fall into spiritual depression. Despite lifelong habits, they are unwilling to become rooted in their spiritual life in the new country. They lose their appetite for the word of God. The sophisticated economic system and business of life has made an impact on the spiritual growth of immigrants. The focus group participants supposed that more than seventy percent of



Habesha immigrants in Boston are working seven days at sixteen hours a day. These factors also contribute to an increasing divorce rate that equals the secular world.

Third, in some churches the elders are not respectful and grateful to their full-time pastor. Therefore, the pastor's salary is not enough payment for their living expenses. Due to this and other financial constraints in the church, the pastors are forced to concentrate on secular jobs rather than being persisting in their calling.

Fourth, the cultural and social bondage of Habesha people makes their church leaders careless in matters of evangelism. People are added to the Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Boston through social ties or relationships such as family relative connections, friends, and marriages. They need to help each other during weddings and seasons of grief. Hence, the leaders of the church are always comfortable with an increase in new members through the arrival of new immigrants from the home country but not by outreach ministry.

Fifth, Ethiopian and Eritrean people need each other. Both countries are antagonistic from the viewpoint of the secular world. Even though the current political situation has split people from both countries, they previously lived together as one nation, Ethiopia. Despite the governmental division, there is still the spirit of cohesion inside their hearts. This fact became apparent during the data collection process and through the visit to the North Carolina Eritrean church in Charlotte. This is the good side of our work for the Kingdom of God.

### **Recommendations**

The study of this project focuses on shaping and developing servant leaders who can minister to the transformation and multiplication of immigrant churches. Habesha

people are multiculturalist by nature. Therefore, the study can be implemented in multicultural contexts like the US where diversified people groups from all over the world are living. Therefore, practical change can be brought about in the following areas:

(1) Leaders of evangelical churches can be trained. Accordingly, the exploration of the fertile elements in the research have demonstrated positive impact on stepping up, renewing, and racing onward toward their vision. (2) Teaching the material in Chapter Two about the biblical and theological foundation for this project is crucial. All disciples or ministers of any evangelical church would be able to use this information in order to lay a solid foundation for preparing future leaders. (3) Use of these research findings can serve as an instrument to minimize the current problems of spiritual immaturity and leadership conflicts in the immigrant churches. Also, the study can be applied not only to immigrant churches but also to a wide range of evangelical church leaders because it comprises features of fundamental character development and leadership training.

Moreover, this research can act as a foundation for any researcher who wants to study about enhancement of New England's Habesha community evangelical churches. Further studies by practical theologians may be used to kindle further change in the church's life. Future research could go on to teach ways of reaching the Habesha diaspora or immigrant communities in the US especially in relation to research on strategic plans for evangelizing this society and planting new churches. The following research projects could include discipleship development, equipping ministers for the next generation, and leading from the back for Habesha immigrant evangelical churches in the US. Those and other areas of research can contribute to future development of this project.

Finally, this research can be used as a manual for model leadership training in evangelical churches: first, in New England Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant evangelical churches; second, in all Habesha diaspora communities everywhere in the US as well as on other continents, since the study focused contextually on this society; third, the study is also helpful for those involved with diaspora people groups anywhere. Furthermore, this research was done for the advantage of all Ethiopian evangelical churches back in the home countries. My mission and calling from the beginning was conceived in that community of faith and practice.

### **Postscript**

During the work of this research, I learned many things that have had an impact on my own ministry. Patience, persistence, and firmness through trials are the major ones. Our Lord is still looking for a servant who is working after his will, who denies himself for the sake of the Kingdom of God, and who goes into the harvest field to be a faithful worker (Mat.24:45-47). In order to be that type of servant, I have traveled through several US cities to investigate Habesha's churches and to gather information from different areas about my fellow citizens. These days, Habesha community churches have a scarcity of honest workers for the gospel. Paul urges Timothy, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth" (2Ti.2:15). The servant has no words of his own, only the words of his Lord. This project attempts to reproduce workers of this kind.

Equipping, beautifying, and multiplying the body of Christ goes parallel with training church leaders and other ministers. This ministry of training has been a continual burden in my heart starting from the day of my calling and following me through more

than thirty-five years of ministry in the church. That vision was finally born through working out this project, by the help of God's grace, in the Asbury Theological Seminary's Beeson International Leadership Center. That journey is biblically stated, "Your beginning will seem humble, so prosperous will your future be" (Job 8:7).

After graduating from Awassa Agricultural College (AAU) in 1983 in Ethiopia, I had been distanced from the academic world for about thirty years while ministering for the Lord in every corner of the countryside in Ethiopia. Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary primarily served as the bridge returning me to academic life. God's grace is to be admired, since my adequacy and achievements are only by Christ, in Christ, through Christ. Praise be to His holy name. This research now is the bridge to a new phase of ministry to the Habesha immigrants in the US and other parts of the world. I will call out joyfully with the apostle Paul, "...I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead. I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Phil.3:13-14).

## APPENDIXES

### Appendix A: Interview Questions

RQ#1-What are the leading hindrances factors to the Ethiopian & Eritrean immigrant's churches growth and expansions?

To find the answer for this question, the following detailed questions would be presented to the participants: -

- (a)-Why people don't come to Christ (believing Jesus)?
- (b)-Why the church doesn't increase in number?
- (c)-What is the reason for new believers not stay (persisted) in the church?
- (d)-How the ethical life of saints can be obstacle for unbelievers?
- (e)-What is main hindrance to the growth of the church?

RQ#2-What kind of strategy and effort recent churches were doing to address those hindrances?

To get sufficient respond for this question, I will ask the interviewee the following questions:

- (a)-Does the congregation aware always about witnessing the gospel?
- (b)-Do the leaders give attention to mission?
- (c)-Do the leaders motivate the members to evangelize their community?
- (d)-Is there continual discipleship teaching in the church?
- (e)-Do the members have time (session) to evaluate (freely discussing) about the growth of their church?
- (f)-What effort the leaders doing to overcome these obstacles?

RQ#3- How can Ethiopian & Eritrean immigrants' churches overcome as fine learn best from practices regarding these hindrances?

These questions are designed to discover the means of delivery to the leadership training as well as projected to access the solutions to the central purpose of the project: -

(a)-What type of teaching materials are available for current immigrant's congregations?

(b)-What type of training is best relevant to the immigrant's church leaders and ministers?

(c)-What strategy is needed to equip, envision and motivate immigrants church ministers and leaders?

(d)-What type of training venue and facilities will have required to accommodate the trainee around Boston area?

(e)-What is the best possible way to do leadership training? (at local church level individually or bringing all church's leaders together at city level?)

(f)-How can the churches can afford the finances to proceed the training?

What is the best way of organizing the training budget together?

## **Appendix B: Focus Group Questions**

1. What is the biggest obstacle for church growth in Boston?
2. Why nonbelievers do not come to Christ?
3. Do you think that church leaders are missional (i.e., have vision to reach the diaspora community)?
4. Does all the church members often have witnessing culture?
5. Do the leaders always aware their congregation about evangelism or to go outreach?
6. How the church can overcome this weakness and become fruitfulness in mission?
7. Do you think short term leadership training can bring changes toward transformation?

## **Appendix C: Survey (Open Ended) Questions about Ethiopian and Eritrean Immigrants in Boston**

1. What are the causes or reasons for immigration to the US?
2. What is the estimated numbers of Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants in greater Boston?
3. How the immigrants adjusted or adapted to new area?  
(Culturally, Linguistic and Economically)
4. What are the core barriers for adjustment or obstacles to living?
5. How is the socio-life of the diaspora community looks like in the city?  
(I.e. The well-coming process of new arrivals', Meetings of the community, etc.)
6. How the immigrants employed and get the jobs?
7. What percentage of the immigrants are trying to improve their educational status in US?
8. What are the major religions of those immigrants?
9. What types of differences and/or encounters are reflected between parent immigrants and their American born second generation?
10. How is the connection (relationship) of immigrants back with their home land families or friends? Do they keep their cultural and ethnic identity or assimilated?

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Position\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix D: Survey Questionnaires to Church Lay Leaders and Ministers**

(To Determine Need for the Study)

Fill out the (circle) one of the following questionnaires based on 1-4 scale

per your opinion (#1-is the least scale and #4-is for the highest)

1. I feel our current church leaders could be better prepared to lead our church into the future.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

2. The elder board of our church is providing genuine spiritual leadership to the church.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

3. Our church provided resources to train members for ministry.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

4. The elder board members demonstrates godly character and provide godly examples to follow

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

5. The pastor is leading the church in the right direction spiritually and organizationally.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

6. The pastor and elders listens to the members concerns in their church.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

7. The church leadership style invites all members for discussion, comments and developing suggestions about their ministry.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

8. Our church people feel comfortable going to the pastor and other lay leaders for counselling.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

9. Disagreements and conflicts within the church are handled appropriately.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

10. Most of the church sermons provides answers for the problem member's faces.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

11. The weekly sermons are easily understood and also provides encouragement and applications.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

12. The sermons are relevant to the life and contextual situation of the congregation.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

13. The Leaders are transformational leaders for members in different ministries within the church.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

14. The leadership is transparent and have opens (readiness) to criticize.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

15. There is a strong sense of love and unity within our church members.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

16. The church people help each other during difficulties.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

17. Our church show good proportional growth to its age.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

18. Our congregation always being aware of witnessing gospel to their community.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

19. The church have strong vision of outreach to reach the community, the city, etc.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

20. The mission's budget of the church is appropriate to the sizes and budget of our church.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

21. The church involvement with the community is good.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

22. The overall worship services meets the expectations of people (attractive?)

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

23. Our church use fasting and praying highly as part of worship.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

24. Our church have balanced and continual teaching and discipleship program.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

25. Our leadership have vision to plant new churches and multiply.

4-Strongly Agree

3-Agree

2-Disagree

1-Strongly Disagree

This form is filled by (Full Name)

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Church\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix E: Demographic Information for Participants**

Name:

Age:

Name of Church:

Educational Status:

Marital Status (Family Condition):

Duration in Christian Life:

How long have you been live in the US?

How long have you been attending in your current church?

Currently in what type of ministry you are serving in your local church?



## **Appendix F: Ethical Considerations Worksheet**

### **(Consent Form Template)**

(Leadership Development for Church Multiplication)

You are invited to be in a research study being done by Mulualet G. Kaba from Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you have well experience in church leadership and ministry for years. If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to answer some interviews individually, to fill out the research questionnaires and send back by mailing as well as come to Freedom Hill Church office once for focus group interview. Although confidentiality will be encouraged during the focus group, it cannot be guaranteed. There may be a minimal level of risk in this study such as some discomfort while sharing in the interview. Please feel free to let me know during the interview process if you wish to skip a question due to discomfort.

Your family will know that you are in the study. If anyone else is given information about you, they will not know your name. A number or initials will be used instead of your name. If something makes you feel bad while you are in the study, please tell Mulualet. You can ask him also questions any time about anything in this study. If you decide at any time you do not want to finish the study, you may stop whenever you want. You can contact Mulualet by phone#617-319-5808 or email [mulu.kaba@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:mulu.kaba@asburyseminary.edu)

Signing this paper means that you have read this or had it read to you, and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or

even if you change your mind later. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do.

---

Signature of Person Agreeing to be in the Study  
Date Signed

Confidentiality/Anonymity

**Appendix G: Open Ended Questions for Different Church Leaders During  
Course Journal Trip**

1. Tell me about the history of the church
2. Tell me about the people in your church
3. Why are people attracted to your church?
4. What are some of your most fruitful ministries?
5. How do you help people become followers of Jesus—Faithful disciples?
6. What have been your greatest challenges?
7. How do you discern what God wants you to do in the future?
8. How do you get people involved in mission and ministry?
9. How do you train people for ministry?
10. What method do you use to develop leaders?

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